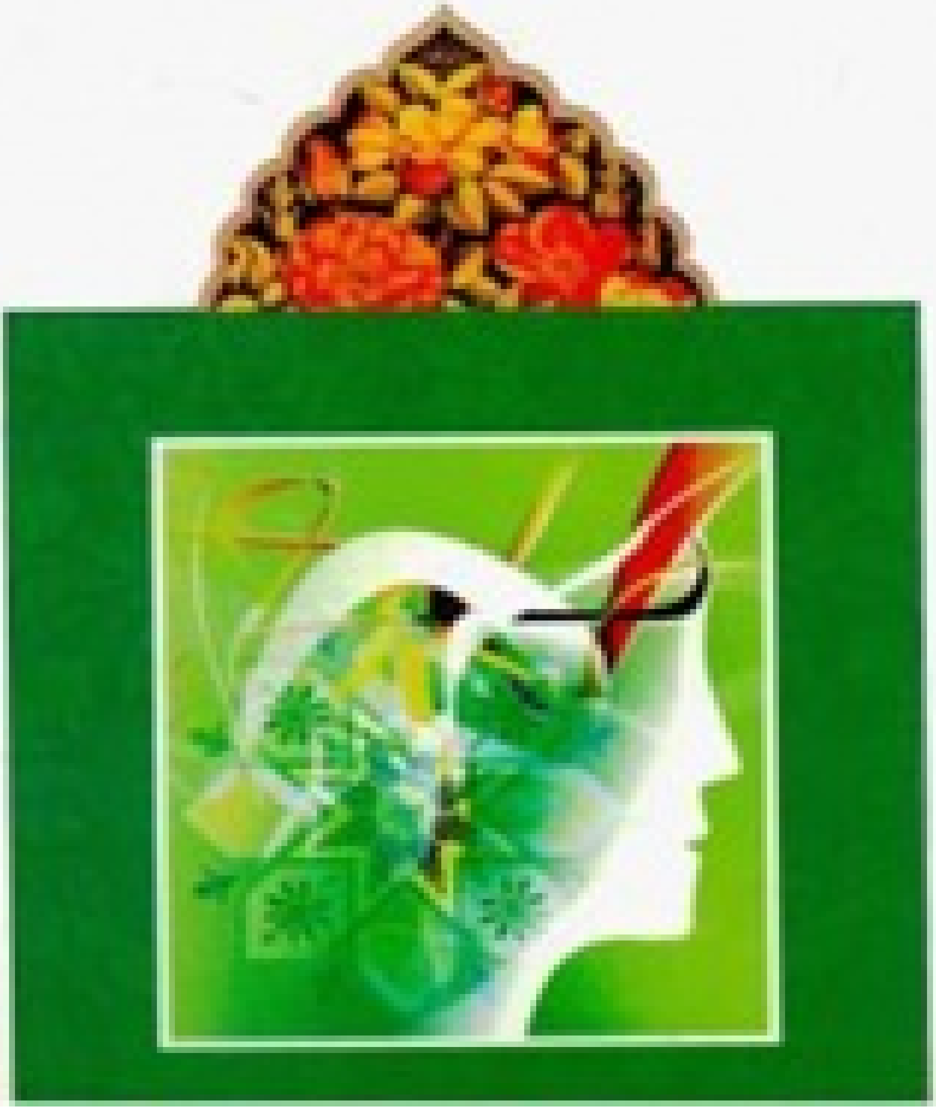
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BACKGROUNDS of POLITICAL THOUGHT IN SHĪ'ĪSM AND SUNNĪSM

Muhammad Masjid-Jame'i

Translator: Mahdi Azadi



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point

This book is an extension and elaboration of four lectures from fall ۱۹۸۷ in the hall of the Contemporary Arts Museum. The book is aimed to provide the main backgrounds of Shi'ite and Sunni political thought, how they were formed, what factors influenced them, how they have reacted and finally making this book possible for the two parties to have a clearer picture of the other, to know the theological and jurisprudential limitations and obligations, the historical experiences and doctrinal structure of the other and their mutual expectations in coordination with these principles, foundations .and capacities

Preface

In the Name of Allah, the All-beneficent, the All-merciful

The precious legacy left behind by the Holy Prophet's Household [ahl al-bayt] (may peace be upon them all) and their followers' preservation of this legacy from the menace of extinction is a perfect example of an

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all-encompassing school [maktab], which embraces the different branches of Islamic knowledge. This school has been able to train many talented personalities by quenching them with this gushing fountain. This school has presented scholars to the Muslim ummah who, by following the Holy Prophet's Household ('a), have occupied the station of clarifying doubts and skepticisms brought forth by various creeds and intellectual currents both inside and outside Muslim society. Throughout the past .centuries, they have presented the firmest answers and solutions to these doubts

Anchored in the responsibilities it is shouldering, the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) World Assembly has embarked upon defending the sanctity of risalah [messengership] and its authentic beliefs—truths which have always been opposed by the chiefs and leaders of anti-Islamic sects, religions and trends. In this sacred path, the Assembly regards itself as a follower of the upright pupils of the school of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a)—those who have always been ready to refute those accusations and calumnies and have tried to be always in the frontline of this struggle on the basis of the expediencies of time and .space

The experiences in this field, which have been preserved in the books of scholars belonging to the school of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a), are unique in their own right. It is because these experiences have been based upon knowledge ['ilm] and the preeminence of the intellect and reasoning, and at the same time, they are completely devoid of blind prejudice, whim and caprice. These experiences address experts, scholars

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and thinkers in a manner that is acceptable to a healthy mind and the pure human .[natural disposition [fiṭrah

In a bid to assist those who are in quest of truth, the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) World Assembly has endeavored to enter a new phase of these worthy experiences within the framework of research and translating the works of contemporary Shi'ah writers or

.those who, through divine guidance, have embraced this noble school

The Assembly is also engaged in the study and publication of the valuable works of pious predecessors and outstanding Shi‘ah personalities so that those who are thirsty for the truth could quench their thirst from this refreshing fountain by listening and embracing this truth, which the Holy Prophet’s Household (‘a) has offered as a gift to .the entire world

It is hoped that our dear readers would not deprive the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) World Assembly of their valuable opinions, suggestions and constructive criticisms in this .arena

We also invite scholars, translators and other institutions to assist us in propagating .the pure Muhammadan (S) Islam

We ask God, the Exalted, to accept this trivial effort and enhance it further under the auspices of His vicegerent on earth, Hadrat al-Mahdi (may Allah, the Exalted, expedite .(his glorious advent

It is appropriate here to express our utmost gratitude to Muhammad Masjid-Jame‘i for writing the book, and to Mahdi Azadi for translating it, as well as to all our honorable colleagues in accomplishing this task especially the dear ones in the .Translation Office for undertaking this responsibility

Cultural Affairs

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Department

Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) World Assembly

Author’s Introduction

The history of the future will show that the ١٩٧٠’s and ١٩٨٠’s were the most important turning points in the political history of Islam and the history of Muslim political

thought. What future follows these turning points is a different issue. What matters is that a great development has occurred, which is supported by numerous varying .experiences both in the Muslim world and internationally

It has to be said that the future of Islam—Islam as a religion and as a historical, cultural and social reality—is strictly related to the present reality. This situation results from the past history of this religion and especially the way it enters the new era, its interaction with the latter and its internal capacities and potential. These three factors, and especially the latter one, have had and will have the greatest share in the .future developments related to the present situation

Meanwhile, what matters is that the essential share role of Islam itself as a source of development and change should not be forgotten. There are many people who study the developments in the history of Islam and contemporary Islam without considering its inherent capabilities and potential or its direct immediate effects while considering it as a historical, cultural and social reality that is merely subject to the present developments, rather than as a reality that, besides the mentioned characteristics, has an independent creativity and activity. One cannot study the developments of .divine religions without considering this last point

There is no

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question that religion itself, since it is believed in by its followers and thus enters the scene of the society, is itself subject to historical and social laws. The question is whether there is a meta-historical reality behind it. If we accept that religion has a metaphysical reality that has somehow been injected into the history, we also have to accept that studying it without this characteristic and merely as a factor out of history will lead us to false conclusions. If we accept this, we will logically have to accept that this meta-historical element will show reactions to various social, intellectual and political currents proportionately to its principles and characteristics. In order to know these reactions, one has to consider its foundations, characteristics, potential for change and adaptive capacities in the same way that one studies the historical, social,

.economic and cultural conditions

* * *

There has been a modem wave of Islamic radicalism throughout the Muslim territories in the last few decades in which has affected both Shi'ites and Sunnies. In those days, and especially after the Islamic Revolution in Iran, when Islamism reached its peak, it seemed that the two schools would react similarly to the new current. However, later when the excitement subsided, it was clarified that the two would go through the new period in two different ways and proportionately to their historical experiences, jurisprudential and theological principles and sociopsychological structure. This difference, as it is the outcome of two different historical

experiences, also results from two different jurisprudential and theological systems. The present situation of either of the two in transition through the new period is in .agreement with its doctrinal systems as it is in harmony to its historical experience

To know the present situation, these two points have to be sympathetically and precisely studied and evaluated and it should be particularly noted out how each of the two schools, in their entirety, have formed the psychological, social and religious structure of their followers and what potentials and capabilities each of them has on accordance to the developments, pressures and necessities of the present era. The clarification of this point, rather than denying it, while contributing to a better understanding of the present situation, can outline the future situation to a certain .extent as well

The discussion here is not a polemical discussion, nor a discussion of the values and of which experience and interpretation of Islam have been right and which have been wrong or for setting forth controversial issues to doubt or weaken Muslim brotherhood or unity. Certainly, a scholarly impartial discussion of the intellectual, doctrinal, historical and psychological distinctions of the parties and the causes and

consequences of each, will contribute to a deeper and more honest knowledge, and will further contribute to brotherhood and unity. The result of denial of realities by the believers and committed is that will provide and explain the same in a distorted way.

Understanding, sharing thoughts and actions, mutual responsibility and participating in the

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shared destiny of each other can be achieved if the parties know each other honestly and bravely and show themselves as they are. This will not be achieved in the world today except by knowing and at the same time respecting each other.

The minimum result of such knowledge is that the parties will not have expectations from each other that are beyond their principles, capacities and limitations. Unfortunately, this has been a problem that Muslims have always faced and are still facing. They should know who they are and who the other party is, what goals they follow and how they interpret them. They should know the way they have to cooperate in order to achieve them.

* * *

The book you are reading is an extension and elaboration of four lectures from fall ۱۹۸۷ in the hall of the Contemporary Arts Museum. The purpose of the lectures at that time was to provide the main backgrounds of Shi'ite and Sunni political thought, how they were formed, what factors influenced them, and how they have reacted and are reacting to the deep and rapid developments, pressures, and necessities of the contemporary period. Finally, they were aimed at making it possible for the two parties to have a clearer picture of the other, to know the theological and jurisprudential limitations and obligations, the historical experiences and doctrinal structure of the other and their mutual expectations in coordination with these principles, foundations and capacities.

Although this and the related discussions

.were warmly welcomed, putting them in writing was delayed

The four chapters of this book are based on the lectures. If the book was to be compiled independently and without considering the lectures, the order of the outlining of the chapters would be different, putting many discussions in separate chapters. However, for certain reasons, the most important one of which was shortage of time and the extensiveness of the discussions and the variety of problems in the contemporary period, this was not accomplished. This also resulted in a large number of notes, some of which are lengthy. I hereby apologize to the reader .for this

Finally, I would like to express thanks to Ayatullah Ja'far Subhani, head of Imam Sadiq ('a) Research Institute, whose facilities, especially the library, benefited me in the compilation of this book, and also Mr. Baha'uddin Khorramshahi, who was its editor. Mr. Mustafa Tajzadeh had the greatest share in holding procuring the lectures, which .I greatly appreciate

I would also like to thank Mr. Muhammad Baqiri Lankarani, who kindly accepted to transcribe the tapes. This work is indebted essentially to his efforts and persistence. I also thank Mr. 'Ali Rida Beheshti, Mr. Kiyumarth Amiri, Mr. Muhammad Bari and the .other brothers who contributed to the organization of this work

Muhammad Masjid-Jame'i

Fall ١٩٩٠

Chapter ١: Contemporary Religious Movements

Contemporary Religious Movements

In the last decade, the Muslim world has been the most restless part of the world and most of the news has been related to it. This has included not only Iran but the entire ,Muslim world

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although Iran has been the center or, rather, the source of inspiration for this movement and restlessness.

What is nowadays construed as the revival of Islam and Islamic fundamentalism encompasses the westernmost part of the Muslim world, i.e. Tunisia and the Arabic Morocco to its easternmost part, i.e. Indonesia and parts of the Philippines settled by Muslims. No doubt, all these countries and other places where Muslims, whether natives or not, constitute a minority compared to the entire population, are affected by this new wave although the degree to which they are affected is different throughout and varies according to the conditions.

Such developments and restlessness did not begin in the recent decade. Most likely, the restlessness in the Muslim world in the recent century has been elevated and more serious compared to the other parts of the world. At least one can say that, from among all the faiths that exist today, Islam as a religion and also as a civilization and culture—the civilization and culture that it has created and the protection of which it has undertaken—has witnessed more movements, struggle and conflicts than any other faith.

No other religion has reacted to such an extent against the full-fledged hegemony of the new culture. Although they may have conflicted or struggled with it positively or negatively, in the end they submitted to it and settled for a peaceful coexistence with it, i.e. they adapted themselves to the status quo at the cost of giving up their own principles and fundamentals

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since, contrary to doing so, they could not survive and could not stop their children and followers from abandonment.(١)

Among all religions, only Islam was firm on its principles and identity, was not absorbed into the modern civilization and supported a face-to-face conflict so as to

maintain its sovereignty at least within its own territory, a sovereignty that had been denied or at least limited by the modern civilization and its advocates. The story of the struggles and conflicts of this religion in the last decade and even the last century is nothing but the sociopolitical realization of the insistence, conflict and confrontation; and this goes back to the very essence of this religion. The internal structure of this religion is so that it calls its believers to a constant attempt for realizing their own .identity and rejecting all that is not part of this

A Muslim, as long as he is a Muslim, is bound to abide by his/her own fundamentals and principles. This is an essential element of his/her belief and essential for his/her eternal salvation and worldly pride and dignity. This is a necessary religious and ideological necessity and an unchangeable, non-negotiable duty. Although, in practice, for a short or long period of time this duty may not be fulfilled for certain reasons, such as weak faith or inappropriate social conditions, it cannot be completely forgotten. As long as there is Islam or Muslimhood, this duty is to be performed and the religion is likely to adopt a position

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For what Christians did in this respect, see Vatican Council II, the Conciliar and - ۱ .Post-Conciliar Documents, pp. ۹۰۳-۹۱۱

according to the present circumstances and based on the claim of coordinating itself .with the same

To put it in a few words, the conflict of this religion with whatever that is unknown goes back to its nature and essence rather than being a temporary or emotional condition that will soon go away and end. Although the entire external conditions have a basic role in its emergence and in the quality of the emergence, the main factor is from within and the external factors only provide the proper conditions. The history of Islam is the history of an endless constant fight between 'tradition' and 'heresy'. (History is a constant attempt for reinforcing the tradition and rejecting heresy.(۱

No matter what the form and dimensions of the heresy are, the fight will persist as

long as it exists. Indeed, there has been no time without such heresy and, consequently, there will be no time without such struggle, although it may not have a severe political form. The form of the struggle determines the conditions but the substance is determined by religion. (۲)

Throughout the history of Islam and especially in the recent decades we have witnessed the struggle and strife between Shi'ism and Sunnism. The struggle by the Shi'ites and by Sunnis to consolidate and stabilize the laws and precepts of Islam and to reject anything other than these is similarly motivated while it originates in the very substance of Islam and cannot be two-pronged. This is why the story of religious struggles in

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۱- For further explanation, see Al-'Aqidah wa'sh-Shari'ah fi'l-Islam (The Belief and the Shari'ah in Islam), pp. ۲۵۰-۲۶۰; Al-Bid'ah: Tahdiduha wa Mawqif al-Islam minha (Heresy: Its Limits and Stance of Islam on It).

۲- Further explanation can be found in chapters ۳, ۴.

a country like Iran is not essentially different from those in other countries such as Syria, Egypt and Pakistan. The contemporary history has narrated these stories in the same way. (۱)

Despite all these, however, one should admit that there are differences and failing to take them into account may entail problems and misunderstandings. Unitive tendencies have prevented a proper understanding and evaluation of the differences. This is a great problem and can be solved only if dealt with impartially and bravely.

The differences relate to the different socioeconomic, political and historical conditions in Shi'ite and Sunni territories on the one hand and to the ideological features of the two schools and the role that such features have played in forming the social, psychological and belief structure of their followers on the other. This is important point that should not be ignored. The problem is not just that these two differ from each other.

More important than this is that, in the light of their way of understanding and beliefs in the course of history, they have grown into two differing series of features. They have lived in two different social, political and cultural backgrounds and, therefore, they have two different psychologies, religious characters, religious thoughts and (sensitivities.(٢

In order to study the ideological features that contribute to a better and deeper understanding of the present situation of the Islamic movement, a study of the political thought of these two schools are of the utmost importance, therefore we will (first deal with there.(٣

Fundamentals of Shi'ite and Sunni Political Thought

First, one

١- For example, see Islamic Movements in Egypt, Pakistan and Iran, Asaf Hussain.

٢- To clarify the discussion, one has to study the effect of Islam on the society and history and its role in social and historical developments as well as its other features as a faith. In this regard, see Idi'uluzhi wa Inqilab (Ideology and Revolution), pp. ١١١-١۴٩; Al-Fikr as-Siyasi ash-Shi'i (Shi'ite Political Thought), pp. ٣٧-١١۵; Al-'Aqidah wa'sh-Shari'ah fi'l-Islam (Belief and Shari'ah in Islam), pp. ١٣٣-١٧٧.

٣- To find out about the differences in the mutual impact of Shi'ite and Sunni ideologies on the Shi'ite and Sunni society throughout the history and in the contemporary era, see Faith and Power, pp. ٣١-۵۵, and Al-Fikr as-Siyasi ash-Shi'i (Shi'ite Political Thought), pp. ٣٧-١٨٠. The latter is one of the few best sources on the subject.

has to see how these principles and factors, whether they are historical, jurisprudential or theological, have formed the religious political understanding of the Shi'ites and Sunnis, why so and what reflections this way of thinking had on their religious political developments in the past and in the present. There is also the question of whether the courses of sociopolitical and even cultural developments of

these two, when coming into conflict with religion, were the same or different and, if they were different, how far were they affected by their theoretical fundamentals in religion and the quality of such a relation; also, how did this understanding affect the .psychosocial structures of the followers of these two schools

It is important to carefully study this subject not because the past of the Shi'ites and Sunnis would be better understood in the light of it. But rather, because, without paying due consideration to it, the present condition of the Islamic movement cannot be well understood. Although it may be said that the present Islamic movement has similarly covered the Shi'ite and Sunni territories, it would be a mistake to presume that the movement was formed and went on based on similar theoretical backgrounds and fundamentals. The effect of the sociopolitical and economic conditions as well as the historical background and the more or less common colonial experience of the believers in these two schools were so strong and critical in forming the present conditions that it would be difficult in the beginning to evaluate

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the importance of the belief characteristics and the religious, political structures of the .two based on two different realizations of the Islamic movement

This indeed should not be interpreted as ignoring the numerous common grounds of the two in various fields such as the political thought. The problem is that there are important distinctive differences despite all the similarities and even the common grounds. Such differences have emerged because of the complex conditions that exist today. A proper impartial understanding of these misleading differences would help understand more deeply the other party and remove any problem and suspicion. .Therefore, they have to be set forth for discussion rather than be hidden

The fact is that the Shi'ites and Sunnis have two different ways, especially in their political outlook, and religious political movements in their societies have occurred in two different ways. Is it not a fact that any sociopolitical movement is formed by the psychosocial facts and the historical experiences and beliefs in its territory? Now, if the facts become different, the movement will surely be affected. The psychologies of

a typical Shi‘ite and a typical Sunni differ as their religious social structures do. When it is so, the results, inspired by the difference, will unavoidably be different as well.(۱)

For example, there is a general tendency in Iran to consider the lack of a religious political leadership among the Sunnis as a great weak point in the contemporary Islamic movement. Such a belief is based on an undue comparison between the Shi‘ites

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۱- One of the best sources according to which one can find out about the differences in the intellectual, psychological and religious structures, the motivations and emotional sensitivities of Shi‘ites and Sunnis and their attitude towards history and especially the early history of Islam, are the books written by Sunnis who converted to Shi‘ism. An example is Muhakimeh-ye Tarikh-e Al Muhammad (Trial of the History of Muhammad’s Dynasty) by Qadi Bihjat Afandi, Li-Madha Ikhtartu Madhhab ash-Shi‘ah, by Amin al-Antaki, and especially Thumma Ihtadayta, by Muhammad at-Tijan as-Samawi, a Tunisian intellectual converted to Shi‘ism. Also see Nazariyyah al-Imamah ash-Shi‘ah al-Imamiyyah, by Ahmad Mahmud Subhi, pp. ۱۵-۶۸.

and Sunnis, ignoring the fact that this arises from the jurisprudential and theological structure, the historical tradition and the psychosocial structure of their society and do not have to exist among the Sunnis as well.

The Shi‘ites, because they are the Shi‘ites and not because they are Iranians or live in the present time, have a tendency towards being guided by a leader and even being leader-makers, which is based on religious requirements while such requirements do not necessarily exist among Sunnis; neither the theoretical foundations nor the historical experience exist for it; neither their psychological structure has grown and been formed so that they would refer to a religious authority for any problem nor their religious social structure is so as to put such a person at the apex of the decision-making power.

Because of the importance of this discussion, it would be better to quote part of the intelligent criticisms of the author of the book Al-Fikr as-Siyasi ash-Shi'i from Muhammad Jawad Mughniyah. In his book ash-Shi'ah wa'l-Hakimun, Mughniyah ,says

The majority of the Sunnis necessitate obeying a tyrant sovereign and being patient" upon his tyranny while denying the right to revolt against him. Shi'ism, however, necessitates encounter and revolution against tyranny and corruption. In this respect, Shi'ism opposes Sunnism and stands against it. According to the majority of Sunnis, revolting against the oppressive sovereign is revolting against the faith and against Islam while Shi'ism provides that such revolt would be within the context of the faith and being

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patient with oppression is revolting against the faith. Here lies the basic reason and the true interpretation of what Ahmad Amin and others say, to the effect that, "Shi'ism is an umbrella for he who seeks the destruction of Islam.", because in the logic of Amin and his descendants, Islam is manifested by and personified in the person sovereign, no matter if he is an oppressor or a just person. Therefore, whoever stands against him has deserted Islam. However, in the logic of Shi'ism, it is the tyrant who has deserted Islam... and, therefore, it is not surprising if he calls ".Shi'ism 'the destroyer'; true, but the destroyer of aberration and corruption

It was Hasan Baṣri who said, "It is necessary to obey the Umayyad although they" may be oppressors... I swear by God what they make good is more than their corruption." Then, he adds, "The Shi'ite Imams, faqihs (jurisprudents) and literary scholars have always stood against oppressive sovereigns and refused to cooperate with them, as they deemed this a sin to do so. Shi'ism by nature advises standing up against the falsehood and altruism for achieving the truth. It would have not been wise for those in power to ignore this point, which is why they always kept the Shi'ites followed and persecuted them anywhere. They bribed the wrongdoing clerics and these two united to kill the pure believers in God and the Prophet and the Ahl al-Bayt

(the Prophet's Household). They welcomed the slaughter and issued a fatwa

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(that the believers had deserted the faith."(۱)

What Mughniyah says is the general perception that the Shi'ites have of their school as well as of the Sunni school and their clerics. Although this is in turn a right theory, it is not yet an inclusive one. It is part rather than all of the reality. One has to see why these are so and those are like that. Is all this due to personal and moral matters or is it far from these? To evaluate the position of each of these two groups, in the first place one has to take a look at the doctrinal, intellectual, social and historical backgrounds in which they have acted and figure out what the obligations and .limitations of each of them have been

They could, however, not go beyond their doctrinal, jurisprudential and theological frameworks. One who follows his/her doctrinal rules and obligations not only cannot be blamed but also has to be praised if he or she does it sincerely and with goodwill. If there is a criticism, it has to be directed towards the choices rather than towards commitment to the accepted principles and standards. Accordingly, expecting things .beyond the principles and obligations is a vain, unreasonable expectation

The critic, after quoting Mughniyah, says, "Without wanting to arouse prejudice in this respect and while appreciating Mughniyah, we have to say that we cannot agree with him in this analysis without considering his special romantic approach. One feels that he has a double standard

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۱- Ash-Shi'ah wa'l-Ḥakimun (Shi'ah and Rulers), pp. ۲۶-۷.

when it comes to the attitudes of the Shi'ites and the Sunnis towards the sovereigns. These two groups lived under different circumstances after the Prophet died and ".under the rule of the sovereigns

Then he adds, "The opinions issued by Islamic jurisprudents were personal as well as public. Fatwas issued were not limited to the issuing jurisprudent. They covered his followers, disciples and advocates as well. Therefore, no issue has to be considered in this way although it contains some traces of the truth as well. It is true that we have to be brave and straightforward in our stances, but we should not forget the limits and boundaries. It is a means rather than an end. Otherwise, the end will be the victim of the means. Nevertheless, the position of the Shi'ites before the tyrant is based on some deep fundamentals, which are rooted in the attitude of the Infallible Imams towards the sovereigns, which is followed by the Shi'ites."(1)

Again, this is one side of the matter. The other side is the people. It is not that the jurisprudential and theological structures as well as the historical experience and consensus of the Sunnis have somehow entailed limitations for the sociopolitical activities of their clerics.

A cleric among the Sunnis is a pious believer who specializes in Islamic sciences and, therefore, referred to concerning religious problems.(2)

According to Shi'ism, a cleric is far from this. He is a safe shelter for people. They refer to him in religious as well personal matters. They

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۱- Al-Fikr as-Siyasi ash-Shi'i (Shi'ite Political Thought), pp. ۶۴-۵.

۲- This is well explained by 'Abdu'l-Karim al-Khatib in his Sadd Bab al-Ijtihad wa ma tarattaba 'alayh, especially pp. ۳-۸.

even ask his advice in various sociopolitical matters. The answer is not to be sought in the social environment. An important part of it, which is the source of the different social environment, has ideological reasons. One of the most important of such reasons is that Shi'ism is open to interpretation by jurisprudents ('ijtihad' is open to further analysis) and Shi'ites are bound to follow (imitate) a jurisprudent, which is quite contrary to Sunnism.

The natural and logical consequence of this is that the people have to update themselves with the religious obligation as to ‘incidents’ and whatever that happens for the first time in any matter, by seeking the Islamic legist’s (mutjahid’s) response and his personal opinion because that is valid and has to be obeyed. A Sunni cleric is at its best a speaker of the fatwa, and a fatwa of that which is older than a thousand .years

A Shi‘ite cleric either expresses his own opinion or that of a living Islamic legist. Both the psychological structure and the personality structure of one who has reached the level of the legist (ijtihad) or issuing fatwa are different from those who relate the fatwa at the highest level while also the psychological structure and the personality .structure of those who refer to these also differ

If in the past, because of the closed Islamic societies, especially the religious communities within Islamic countries and the slow pace of social, cultural and economic developments, this difference could not be dealt

with, but it has now emerged. The point is that the difference is not new. It is a difference more or less as old as the two religious schools, but it has recently .emerged from sociopolitical dormancy

Apart from these, many affairs that the Sunnis think of as deserving to be dealt with only by the rulers and refer to the latter are referred in Shi‘ism to the faqih (Islamic jurisprudent). This is not merely for political reasons. Its social aspect is quite stronger and more important. Because of this, on the one hand the Shi‘ite cleric thinks of himself as having the necessary powers and, on the other hand, the people refer to him in their own affairs. Therefore, the cleric expects to be obeyed while the people also accept it as their religious duty to obey him. Such things have never been and could never be experienced by the Sunni society in history and also seem very unlikely (to be experienced in the future.(۱

Religious Leadership

The concept of religious leadership and the need to follow the full-fledged religious legist [mujtahid jami‘ ash-shara’it] is one of the fundamentals of Shi‘ite jurisprudence and theology. These fundamentals, as they put the Shi‘ite legists at a top position, makes the people obey them as well. This is not just to say that the Shi‘ites refer to religious legists in their own problems. Basically, the Shi‘ite school is so that it can educate such legists. Again, the problem is not that, for example, the Shi‘ite clergies

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١- The fact is that the clerics in both Sunnism and Shi‘ism develop under the influence of two different types of ideological, historical, intellectual and sociopolitical conditions. This is especially true of the last two centuries, particularly the contemporary period. The clerical institution in Shi‘ism is an independent institution. Some have said that, throughout the history, this institution has been recognized both by the people as well as the state as an independent institution and this is believed by the institution itself as well as the Shi‘ite society. At least in the Iranian society, this cannot be ignored. The Iranian society, at least from the Qajarid era onwards, especially where it relates to the mass of the people, has been formed as if it were constantly required to refer to this institution. One can go so far as to say that the people, for different reasons, needed this institution more than the latter needed the people. It would not be an exaggeration to say that the clergy as an institution is in fact the material realization of the affective, psychological and religious needs of our people. This is why the relation has endured to date, despite the many domestic and international problems. This institution has been the affective and moral support of the people for at least the last two or three centuries. Not only were the people willing to refer to them for matters relating to their personal and private lives, but also they referred to them to seek solutions for their problems in times of hardship and disaster. A complete study of these issues would be lengthy. However, when it comes to the Shi‘ite clergy and leadership, the aforementioned is true. Nevertheless, none of such facts and experiences can be and perhaps could not be seen amongst the Sunnites. They had other ideological fundamentals and different individual, collective and historical experiences. A cleric among them means a specialist in Islamic and

jurisprudential issues, like with any other job in the society. Others had their own jobs and the clergy are busy with regular prayers and Friday communal prayers, and studied religious and jurisprudential issues, for which they could be referred. Unfortunately, the recent developments and the reforms in their educational system have given them a more official governmental position and have westernized them and, consequently, the people. In one of his sermons (on ١٩ April ١٩٨١), Shaykh Kashk, the most famous and the most popular preacher in the Arab World, thus addressed the clergy at al-Azhar: "In ١٩۶١, al-Azhar received such a strong blow under the name of 'reforms' that it was actually destroyed. O', the members of al-Azhar, tell me, which part of the Qur'an and how many surahs can you quote verbatim when you graduate with your degree? Nowadays, al-Azhar graduates cannot even read the Qur'an. Al-Azhar has been hit so hard that its shaykh was a specialist in philosophy. When was it decided that the al-Azhar shaykh should be a specialist in philosophy? One shaykh had a PhD from Germany and his predecessor had one from France. Are Muslims so inefficient that they have to go to France to get a doctorate degree? I don't know who is going to be the next shaykh. Perhaps an army general will take over al-Azhar. Who knows? However, I know that, since the reforms, the al-Azhar leadership has abandoned serving Islam." He adds, "The new approach of the parvenu thinkers is acquiring knowledge without an educator or shaykh. They directly refer to books but do not understand anything. Pious preachers who are typically of an old age of about ٧٠ have now been substituted by adult boys who have read a couple of pages of Ibn Taymiyyah or ibn 'Abdu'l-Wahhab and can protect the faith. What a funny show! Oh you, the Shaykh of al-Azhar and all those who have sunken into a deep sleep and turned Islam into a pasture where everyone can graze." Payambar wa Fir'un (The Prophet and the Pharaoh), pp. ٢١٩-٢٢٢. Despite all such criticisms and the other criticisms that have been and are being made, however, one has to say that they have unintentionally distanced themselves from the sociopolitical life, and this has brought about numerous problems, especially in Sunni religious societies and thus, being the main cause of the deviation of Islamic movements in these societies. Indeed, it must be emphasized that such distancing has been the inevitable natural consequence of their previous position rather than their conscious or irresponsible will. This is an issue of their history rather than their present and is rooted in distant

pasts rather than in recent history. It is interesting to know that a person like Rashid Riḍa, who has strong anti-Shi‘ite tendencies, openly appreciates the effective, active role of the Shi‘ite clergy and their efforts in maintaining the line of Islamism in the society. He even emphasizes to his fellow clergy on having a role similar to that of the Shi‘ite clergy. See Andisheh-ye Siyasi dar Islam-e Mu‘asir (Political Thought in the Contemporary Islam), pp. ۱۴۱-۲. Concerning the position of the Sunni clergy and their role throughout the history of Islam, see the article ‘Ulama’ (the Clergy), in the book Islamic Society and the West, by Gibb and Bowen, pp. ۸۱-۱۱۳. Also see Al-Islam bayn al-‘Ulama’ wa’l-Hakimun (Islam among the Clergy and the Sovereigns), by ‘Abdu’l-‘Aziz al-Badri. For criticisms by modernists and progressivists against the clergy, for example take a look at the criticisms by one of the most influential religious thinkers in the Arab World, Khalid Muhammad Khalid, in the book Ash-Shi‘ah fi’l-Mizan (Shi‘ah in al-Mizan), by al-Mughniyah, pp. ۳۷۵-۸, and also those by one of the most accredited non-religious Arab thinkers in Al-Islam wa’l-Khilafah fi’l-‘Asr al-Ḥadith (Islam and Caliphate at the Age of Hadith), by Aḥmad Baha’uddin, pp. ۱۸-۳۴. For a more impartial and empathetic examination of the role of the clergy and especially their effective share in the protection of the Arab literary heritage, see Min Ḥaḍir al-Lughah al-‘Arabiyyah, pp. ۲۴-۵.

have throughout history been more struggling and braver than their Sunni counterparts; rather, it is that the theoretical fundamentals of Shi‘ism reinforces and even creates such characteristics.(۱)

Emphasizing his beliefs, a Shi‘ite cleric can stand up, without any doubt or fear, against the ruling system in cases in which he thinks fit and proper while also calling the people to join him. However, based on what part of his beliefs can a Sunni scholar do so? It is true that the collection of Sunni jurisprudence and theology provides examples of struggles in which standing up against the oppressive Sultan is advised and even necessitated.

However, firstly these examples are not typical, i.e. there are more and more valid cases in opposition to such thought.(۲) Secondly, it can at least be said that the texts on Sunni jurisprudence and theology do not show such an attitude so clearly and

explicitly as the texts in Shi‘ite jurisprudence and theology do, and this is the point. In such a background, how can one expect the emergence of clerics who have a defiant attitude and at the same time be committed to the jurisprudential, theological and ?ideological fundamentals

Looked at from this angle, it is not a personal matter anymore and cannot be attributed only to the personal characteristics of Shi‘ite or Sunni clerics. It is the jurisprudential and theological structures of these two schools that nurture their clerics and followers in two different ways in terms of their stance in important political issues. Accordingly, these

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A clear example of what was just said can be witnessed in the relations of Shaykh -۱ Ja‘far Kashif al-Ghata’ and Fath ‘Ali Shah. See Nokhostin Ruyaruyiha-ye Andisheh-garan-e Iran ba do Rawiyyeh-ye Tamaddun-e Burzhuwazi-ye Gharb (The First Encounters of Iranian Thinkers with the Two Sides of the Western Bourgeoisie Civilization), pp. ۳۲۹-۳۲. Numerous other examples are provided by Cole in Roots of .North Indian Shi‘ism in Iran and Iraq, pp. ۱۱۳-۲۰۴

See Ma‘alim al-Khilafah fi’l-Fikr as-Siyasi al-Islami (Worlds of Caliphate in the - ۲ Islamic Political Thought), pp. ۱۲۵-۶, and also An-Nazariyyat as-Siyasiyyah al-.Islamiyyah (Islamic Political Theories), pp. ۷۱-۲

theoretical fundamentals have, throughout the history, resulted in the formation of psycho-sociopolitical foundations appropriate to their own characteristics and in practice put the Shi‘ites, the Sunnis and the clerics of these two schools on two (historically, socially, intellectually and ideologically different paths.(۱

It would be a gross mistake if we want to compare these two without considering their differences. Indeed, a number of committed dynamic young Sunnis may gather together in such groups as Islamic parties and choose an individual as the political and religious leader. Yet, such an action can hardly succeed and last without any religious foundation or obligation and without it collapsing in confrontation with hard realities.

Apart from this, such a limited action cannot be generalized to the entire society. Each society goes forward according to its own specifications rather than according to (what a certain group desires.(۲

Nevertheless, it is not expected to fully explain the goal here. Rather, it should be considered that these differences exist and they have roots as deep as the history itself in the two schools. They have to be studied scientifically and without prejudice so that each can be studied better and we will not expect anything beyond the ideological capacities and characteristics of each other. The failure to do so has been .the source of some problems, especially in recent years

In order to find out what the effect of the political thought of the Shi'ites and the Sunnis are on the Islamic movement, the characteristics of this movement have

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McDonald thus quotes from Goldziher, "Among the Shi'ites, absolute legists exist -۱ today. This is because they are considered to represent the Absent Imam [Imam-e Gha'ib]. Therefore, their position is completely different from that of the Sunni clerics among the Sunnis. They freely criticize and even control the Shah. However, the Sunni clerics in general are considered as individuals who follow the government." Shorter .Encyclopaedia of Islam, p. ۱۵۸

In the absence of such an institution, the clergy and other institutions such as -۲ religious communities and missions, which have been protecting Islam in such countries as Iran, some religious Sunni intellectuals have suggested establishing Islamic political parties. Their primary goal in the first days of the formation of such an idea is to create legal and social institutions for protecting Islamic values and laws rather than resorting to political activities. In the Iranian society, what controlled the central governments against the unbridled Western modernism, antireligious and antinationalist actions was the clergy as well as the socio-religious institutions and even the traditional economic institutions in the bazaar. However, these institutions either did not exist in other Islamic countries or they lacked sufficient ability and independence. In such countries, what controlled the regimes, or what the latter, was

afraid of was the public opinion. However, this factor, firstly, could not react promptly and, secondly, was easily affected by propaganda and threats of the ruling regimes. Therefore, committed religious intellectuals and clerics thought of establishing Islamic political parties. For Example, the author of Ma'alim al-Khilafah fi'l-Fikr as-Siyasi al-Islami (Worlds of Caliphate in the Islamic Political Thought), thinks that the formation of political parties that "call to the goodness and prohibit the evil" is obligatory, saying, "Then, if a political party acts according to what has been mentioned in the verse, the remaining Muslims will not face the sin of omitting the action because it is an obligation for the community and the religion does not allow impeding the formation of other political parties. This would be impeding the action according to obligation and is unlawful according to the shari'ah." He then adds, "As acting according to obligation does not require the ruler's permission and, rather, subjecting such action to the ruler's permission is unlawful according to the shari'ah, therefore, for the Muslims to form political parties, it is not necessary to obtain the ruler's permission." ibid., pp. ۲۷۳-۴. According to another author, "The right to criticize is among the rights recognized by Islam for the citizens of the Islamic society. Therefore, if some people want to call the public to their thoughts and opinions by this means, they can form political parties and communities." Nizam al-Hukm fi'l-Islam (System of Order in Islam), p. ۹۲. For further explanation, see Al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun wa'l-Jama'at al-Islamiyyah al-Ḥayat as-Siyasiyyah al-Misriyyah (Muslim Brotherhood and Islamic Communities of the Egiptian Political Life), pp. ۱۹-۴۸, ۳۱-۱۳۲; and also Ma'alim fi't-Tariq .(Worlds on the Way), p. ۱۷۳

to be clarified. Much indeed has been said and written in this respect. Without a doubt, in the recent decade, nothing in the world has gained more attention than this movement. This book is not for repeating or evaluating these analyses. Rather, it is a study by considering the historical and social aspects in contemporary history .throughout the Third World, part of which is the Muslim world

From a more inclusive and comprehensive perspective, the present Islamic movement is the dawn of a new era in the history that has covered almost the entire Third World. Although the manifestations of this era are not the same throughout the

Third World, they still exist anywhere and, for certain reasons, they have emerged in the Muslim World more strongly, but the strength with which they have emerged in the Muslim World varies depending on the historical conditions, the depth of religious influence, the degree of creativity brought about by Islam in that region throughout the history, and the volume of economic, industrial, social and political developments. It cannot be denied, however, that its scope has expanded to cover every where and .has had a comprehensive influence. Now let's see what the story is

Since the Third World countries entered the modern era, while their entry varied depending on which part of the world they were in, a new historical period began that more or less continued to the late ۱۹۶۰'s and early ۱۹۷۰'s. This was the time that marked the beginning of a new

period (both in terms of culture and sociopolitical tendencies) that differed from the previous period in some significant ways. It is quite natural if the latter period does not have the same origin in all countries. It begins earlier or later, strongly or weekly, .depending on the historical, economic and political characteristics of the country

From the early ۱۹۶۰'s to the late ۱۹۷۰'s and the early ۱۹۸۰'s, the new period is politically marked with unrest in the Third World and especially the Muslim World(۱) as the political manifestation of this new period, which is either entirely formed by the .historical period or is under the influence of its characteristics

The modern period for the Third Worlders began when they first came into contact with the modern civilization and history, whether through colonialism or by ordinary non-colonial contacts. Before such contacts took place, they lived their own way of life, from China and Japan to India, Iran, Egypt and other African countries—Latin American countries are outside the present discussion because of historical and demographic reasons. This discussion is about those countries that had a civilization and culture and lived according to them while they suddenly evolved by coming across the modern world, without the historical course to be suddenly cut off by massive immigration, as it happened to Latin America, where the immigrants had a

sharply different culture with that of the native inhabitants, thus imposing the (developments.(۲

Before contacts, changes and developments in such countries were limited to their historical and cultural

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.See Payambar wa Fir'un (The Prophet and the Pharaoh), pp. ۲۸۳-۹۵ -۱

As to Latin American revolutionary thought and how much its characteristics are -۲ different from those of the revolutionary thoughts in many Third World countries and especially the Muslim World, see Fidel and Religion, by Ferri Betto, and especially the collection of views and speeches Che Guevara in Che Guevara and the Cuban Revolutionz to learn about Che Ghuevara's left thought and, for example, its twin left thought in Iran, which is the policy of Fada'iyan-e Khalq (the People's Devotees) before the Islamic Revolution of Iran. Compare this book with the greatest books of the latter group's theoretician, Bizhan Joz'i. For further explanation, see Idi'uluzhi wa Inqilab (Ideology and Revolution), pp. ۲۱۴-۲۰ and Iran, Dictaturi wa Pishraft (Iran: Dictatorship and Progress), pp. ۳۷-۲۴۳; also Islam and the Search for Social Order in Modern Egypt, which studies the intellectual and sociopolitical developments of the Egyptian society in the light of the biography of one of the most important and most .effective early ۲۰th-century intellectuals, Muhammad Husayn Heykal

characteristics. However, when contacts occurred and gradually expanded and deepened, the modern period began. This period had characteristics that will be .mentioned as far as they relate to the present discussion

The Reign of the Elite

The important characteristic of this period has been the influence of modern culture on the educated powerful elite of these countries. Despite this influence, which was occasionally very deep and sometimes reached a degree of being fond of it or alienation, the masses of people until the early ۱۹۶۰'s and ۱۹۷۰'s, depending on the pace of the socioeconomic developments or their society being open or closed, had

not yet been directly, effectively and comprehensively influenced by this culture. They lived in a traditional environment and in special conditions dating from the old times. The values and their lifestyles were those of the old times as well as their aspirations .and ideals

Although some elements of modern culture had penetrated their lives whether through the educated elite or through daily living necessities, which were constantly under pressure of technology, this was not yet an evolving influence. The social, cultural and economic foundations either survived in their traditional forms or the new (developments were not so extensive as to cause a general metamorphosis.(١

This historical period in the Third World and in Islamic countries has two important characteristics. One is the same as was said, i.e. the deep influence of modern culture on the powerful educated elite of these societies and the latter's being more or less alienated from the native culture—which indeed

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.For example, see An Ruz-ha (Those Days) translated by Husayn Khadivjam -١

varied depending on the individuals, conditions and regions—and the continuation of the past culture and heritage by the masses of the people. The second characteristic is the unrivaled and forceful domination of modern culture and its value system on the decision-making system and general planning of the society, which was indeed .manifested by the same elite that were influenced by modern culture

This hegemony was, on the one hand, due to the dogmatic belief of the elite of absolute superiority of modern culture(١) and, on the other hand, to some form of implicit admission of the masses to the effect that, although they kept living in the traditional atmosphere of their own society, they somehow admitted such superiority. The admission was made at least by making no permanent explicit objection to it. Although there were occasionally objections, these were occasional, unsystematic and temporary. Undoubtedly, the colonial powers also had a critical role in making (modern culture and its value system dominant.(٢

Briefly, this is the nature of the period of the contemporary history of Third World countries in general and Islamic countries in particular. The mass of the people and their culture was marginalized in the active sociopolitical and cultural life. The modern-class elite reigned absolutely as the pre-modern dictators had reigned, the difference being that they had a modern appearance and, by the way, it was this appearance that further consolidated their position. The goal was to lead the society towards values and characteristics promoted by modern culture while all

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For example, see the views of Taha Husayn in his controversial book Mustaqbil ath- -۱ Thiqafah fi Misr (Future of the Revolution in Egypt), which was written in early ۱۹۴۰'s, in which he says, "The path of the movement is clear and direct and there is no doubt or deviation in it. The path that we have to follow is that of the Europeans and go their way so as to be like them and be their partners in the modern civilization, whether in the good or in the evil, in the sweet or in the bitter, in the obligations or in the undesirable, in the advantages or in the disadvantages. One who thinks otherwise is either deceitful or deceived." Quoted from Mu'allifat fi'l-Mizan, p. ۱۹. You can find a .summary of his views and their critique in E. Von Grunebaum, Islam, pp. ۲۰۸-۱۶

See Al-'Alam al-Islami wa'l-Isti'mar as-Siyasi wa'l-Ijtima'i wa'l-Thaqafi (Muslim - ۲ .World and the Socio-political Revolutionary Colonialism), especially pp. ۱۵۸-۹

this was done thanks to the apparent consent or at least the silence of the children (and protectors of the old heritage.(۱

Indeed, this did not mean that the past culture and heritage was entirely forgotten and the modernist elite that were in power did not pay any attention to it. It was not so, rather it was also emphasized. However, the problem was that the past was looked at and judged from beyond the value system and attitude of modern civilization. Therefore, it was less similar or conforming to the reality the way it was and the way it existed among the masses. Such an image was in harmony with the (identity, needs, inclinations and goals of the same ruling culture and the ruling class.(۲

This is exactly why the people were marginalized from the active sociopolitical life. They were usually working for those in power or those fond of power in the society, both of these groups either had modernist tendencies or were modernists. They did not have any opinion of their own and looked at the events indifferently or probably with some sort of fear or worry. They neither had reached a certain degree of intellectual or cultural maturity that they could adopt new viewpoints nor could say something against the unrivaled hegemony of modern culture over their society. The dazzle of the civilization and its heralds and supporters had captured the eyes of all. It is against for this reason that the sociopolitical developments in this historical

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۱- Muhammad al-Mubarak provides a description of this period in his birthplace Syria in the elaborate introduction to his book Al-Fikr al-Islami al-Hadith fi Muwajihah al-Afkar al-Gharbiyyah (Islamic Thought of Hadith in Confrontation with Western Thoughts), a description which is full of pain and suffering caused by the aggressions towards this culture, language, customs and all their religious and cultural manifestations. Specially refer to Islam in the Modern World, Kant and Smith, pp. ۱۱۴-۶۱, which provides a sympathetic account of the wounded religious feelings of Arabs and Muslims in the modern era. In the International Journal of the Middle East Studies, no. ۴, ۱۹۸۱.

۲- Examples of such an understanding can be seen in Turkish Nationalism and the Western Civilization, by Diya' Gukalep, the spiritual leader of modern Turkey. Also, see the scholarly introduction to 'Ilm wa Tamaddun dar Islam (Science and Civilization in Islam), by Sayyid Husayn Nasr, which criticizes such an outlook and interpretation. And also Idi'uluzhi wa Inqilab (Ideology and Revolution), pp. ۶۴-۹۳.

period are mainly formed by statesmen or elite thinking differently from the ruling system.

It should be borne in mind, however, that there was no difference in the essence of these two. Both those in powers and their political opposition, who were entirely or partially from the modernist elite, had already considered modernism and the new

civilization as the ideals. Their difference was about who should rule or about variety of tastes, quite contrarily to the subsequent period, in which the developments are formed by the youth rather than by this group.(1)

As we mentioned, the sociopolitical and even the intellectual and cultural developments of this period were formed by the modernist westernized elite. The mass of the people are in the margin of the active social developments and life and are either indifferent witnesses or the means for the realization of the same. During this period, both the power and the leadership of the opposition political currents were in the hands of the elite. It was as if the sociopolitical interactions took place in a space beyond that of the practical life of the mass of the people.

The Youth Come on the Scene

As the socioeconomic developments accelerated and the political and cultural pressures increased, from early ۱۹۵۰'s onwards, the ground was prepared for the emergence of another historical period, which will now be discussed. This is a period which is different from the previous one in terms of its intellectual and cultural tendencies, social origin, political claims and leadership system. The accelerated economic and

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۱- To find out about the intellectual and ideal characteristics of Muslim intellectuals in this part of history, especially see G.E. von Grunebaum, Islam, ۱۹۴۹, pp. ۱۸۵-۶, which also provides a critique of it.

industrial developments penetrate the more or less traditional and introverted societies of the masses of the people.

The opened society exposes them to new intellectual, philosophical and scientific currents while also sensitizes and outrages them by directly or indirectly insulting and humiliating their heritage, culture and religion. Population concentration around big cities, expansion of the mass media, universal education, widened class gap,

loosening and even destruction of institutions and factors that determined an individual's position in a society result in a new situation that finally entails the loosening of the apparently unshakable position of the ruling modernist elite and their thoughts and ideals.(1)

Nevertheless, such questions as 'How did the creeping transition take place?', 'How did the next period begin?', 'How was the social and cultural ground for the absolute domination removed?' and, principally, 'Why such a tendency was formed?', and 'Where in the society was such tendency stronger?', can be answered by providing further elaboration separately. What is important is that this period began two to three decades ago. It has had ups and downs and its signs appeared sooner or later in different regions. Its important characteristic is 'seeking original values (radicalism)' and 'individualism'. In other words, its goal is going back to the true tribal, national, religious, racial, linguistic, cultural origins, and the historical distinctions, even if it requires some form of disintegration.(2)

The signs of the formation of this period can be seen in many Third World countries. Sociopolitical unrests in many Third World states, where they relate

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1- Unfortunately, there is little serious study about how religious societies in Islamic countries responded to modernism and what the psychological consequences were on Muslim youth. In this respect, see Idi'uluzhi wa Inqilab (Ideology and Revolution), pp. 169-78, Payambar wa Fir'un (The Prophet and the Pharaoh), pp. 273-95, and researches by Sa'duddin Ibrahim, the well-known Egyptian sociologist, who mainly worked on the social backgrounds of religious movements in Egypt. For a summary of his article and introduction to the author and his activities, especially see his article An Anatomy of Egypt Militant Islamic Groups, in International Journal of the Middle East Studies, 1981.

2- Concerning the effect of the socioeconomic developments on radicalistic and individualistic tendencies of the youth in the Third World, see Hind wa Pakistan (India and Pakistan), pp. 141-91, and also Sa'duddin Ibrahim's book The New Arab Social

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to their social, cultural and political conditions, are mainly caused by the formation of this new period. The Islamic movement of the last century can also be traced within (the same classification.(۱

The new period has significant differences with the previous one whether in terms of its nature or its sociocultural background, goals or trends. The formation of the new period is a consequence of the clash with the modern culture, deviating from the past historical policy and attempting to adapt the society to the modern culture, at least where it related to those in power and the planners, while here, it is a reaction to such a passive attitude which deems unconditionally following and adaptation. It seeks to return to its origins although it may be ready to pay a heavy price to achieve the same. There, the power lied in the hands of the westernized elite and the people were practically pushed to the brink and were simple observers while here the power lies in the hands of the young people who have turned away from the modern standards, .and the mass of the people have entered the sociopolitical life more actively

Despite the numerous differences of these two historical phases, the formation of the second phase is a natural and logical consequence of the rule of the first one. The modern civilization, when entering the Third World territory, was too dazzling to resist. A small group was attracted to it while the mass of the people stayed watching it

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۱- .For further explanation, see Islamic Future, the Shape of Ideas to Come, pp. ۴۷-۵۹

without any strong reaction and chose to be silent before it. However, this did not imply their final submission, especially in regions inheriting a bright culture and civilization. They somehow entered a period of latency, which they did not come out of until the last two or three decades. Their leaving this condition assured the second .phase

At any rate, time had to pass for developments to take place and experiences to be acquired, along which a morale for fighting the undesirable reality and the courage to stand against the ruling current be formed for such a great development to take place. However, the fact is that the heavy socioeconomic developments in many Third World countries provided the best ground for the appearance of the second historical phase. The youth, having emerged out of the traditional society, lacked the necessary characteristics to challenge the ruling power, culture and power system. His faith and belief might simulate him to take an action but such action could not be turned into a .course to bring about a new historical period

An example is the movement of the Sikhs, who have risen against and fought the central government since the early ۱۹۸۰'s. More than anything else, this movement is indebted to the great developments of the Indian society in recent decades and the quality of programming of those in power there. Certainly, if all the factors other than the last one existed, such a movement would either basically not exist or at least it

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(would not be on such a scale and would not have such solidity.(۱

The present Islamic movement can also be analyzed according to the above-mentioned points. It is the political-religious manifestation of this second historical period in the Muslim world although this movement is deeper and more inclusive than the similar political movements in the non-Muslim part of the Third World and, indeed, .such characteristics relate to Islam and the Islamic civilization

As the religion of the Islamic civilization, Islam, a glorious heritage to be proud of, which at the same time made up the historical and the present identity of the Muslims, has been constantly criticized, attacked and even violated since the Muslim societies met with the modern civilization. Although Muslims showed reactions to the attacks according to the present requirements, these reactions did not go so far as to deny the rule of thought and the westernized policy reigning in the Muslim societies. If there were such cases, they were limited and insignificant and were mainly fed by religious dogmatism rather than by intellectual, cultural or social maturity at an

optimum level. It is interesting to know that, in the meanwhile, the West had such uncontested hegemony that even defending Islam was done with its help. The content of the arguments was that Islam is right and true since it agrees with the standards of the modern civilization and is even the same as the latter. Meanwhile, almost all attempts were dedicated to proving the similarity of Islam and the

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.See Hind wa Pakistan (India and Pakistan), pp. ٩١-١۴١ -١

(modern civilization so as to prove the truth of the former.(١

Such conditions persisted nearly into the ۶٠'s. Yet, a set of factors, which it would be too lengthy to mention, made the Muslims and especially the young people and the students to rebel in a similar fashion to their counterparts in the Third World although more strongly and at a faster pace. The second phase thus began. This phase emerged sooner in countries where the socioeconomic as well as the intellectual and cultural developments were faster, more forceful and deeper and the Islamic faith and culture were attacked more frequently and under more pressure. Through these countries, the other regions were influenced depending on how much they were aware of the new phase based on their social, intellectual, religious and psychological (background.(٢

The Developments in the Eastern Bloc

It would be appropriate here to mention the present developments in the Eastern Bloc, which is influenced by the cultural, tribal and religious realities and claims and by the nations residing therein. Although this Bloc has been led towards its origins for reasons different from those leading the Third World towards its national, cultural and religious origins, it cannot be denied that right now these two are pursuing more or less similar goals and, most likely, the success of each of them in achieving their goals stimulates and motivates the other. The individualistic and autonomous claims of some tribal and racial groups residing in this Bloc, which sometimes goes as far as separatism and seeking independence, certainly will further

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۱- This and its complications are well explained by Hamilton Gibb in Modern Trends in Islam, pp. ۱۲۴-۷.

۲- For example, see Inside the Iranian Revolution, pp. ۳۹-۵۸; also, Idi'uluzhi wa Inqilab (Ideology and Revolution), pp. ۱۵۰-۸۴.

encourage radicalism and individualism by Third Worlders. Now we will exaime the problem and how it began.

As the changes and developments within the Third World are mainly caused by the formation of the new historical period in these countries, the rapid deep developments of recent years in the Eastern Bloc is also one of the manifestations of the new history that has begun for some time and will continue. The basic difference between these two is that the first historical period belongs to the Third World and its history and, for various reasons that are mainly rooted in its industrial, political and military weakness, will remain within the same limits, while the recent historical period, although it is presently within the borders of the Eastern Bloc, will have results that will go far beyond its borders to turn into a vast deep development in the entire contemporary history because, firstly, some of the causes of its formation are globally motivated and relate to the rapid industrial and ultra-industrial> developments-whether in military or non-military technology—in the ۱۹۷۰'s and ۱۹۸۰'s in developed countries(۱) and, secondly, because this Bloc is one of the two big stakeholders in international politics.

At any rate, what is important is to find out about the characteristics of this period and why and how they appeared. As we have already said, numerous factors were involved in the formation of this period. Here we intend to study them where and so far as they relate to the cultural realities and

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۱- For further explanation, see Mawj-e Sewwom (The Third Wave), especially pp. ۳-۲۷,

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.culture in its general sense

In order to know what the characteristics are and what were the causes of their formation were one has to clarify how the modern civilization and history began and how it penetrated into countries—i.e. countries later forming the Eastern Bloc—that had no share in its development, how it was absorbed and functioned there and what changes it underwent. Also how it encountered the traditional cultures and civilizations and tribal, linguistic and religious heritages and, in general, what constitutes the historical, national and tribal identity of the people in these countries. More importantly, what was the position that the ruling power of the society adopted and how it dealt with the industrial, economic and social development and renovation. Finally, did it entirely ignore the traditional culture and did it cater to nothing but the modern culture and its necessities or did it leave some space for the living and (flourishing of the native culture rather than looking at it as a rival and enemy.(۱

The study of this point clarifies the root of many developments of the present and future. Although the developments in the Eastern Bloc began for more tangible reasons that were mainly political, economic and industrial, the problem is that these developments and principally the potential to seek change and development, which is somehow a cause of those developments, had to be led to its natural path, and one of the best paths indeed was radicalism. It is mainly under the cover of this claim

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The fundamentals and structure of Marxist ideology was so that its advocates - ۱ would call its advocates to forcibly reject anything that was contrary to the fundamentals. Their history is full of violent actions and pressure against those that did not think the way they did. For example, see Dar Zirzamini-ye Khoda (In God's Basement), and also Qadiyyah-ye Turkistan ash-Sharqiyyah (The East Turkistan Affair), which gives an account of the crackdown on the Muslims in the Turkistan region by Chinese and Russian communists. For a better example, see Qiyam-e

.Basmachiyan (The Basmachiyan Rise), especially pp. ۵۱-۱۳۱

that the developments, where they relate to the people, are manifested and, most likely, this cover, which has an effective share in the present sociopolitical .developments, will retain its importance in the future as well

Let's put it more clearly. The modern civilization first developed and thrived in Southern Europe and later in Western Europe. This civilization was the natural product of the diverse developments that encompassed Western European nations in the post-Renaissance centuries. Therefore, apart from the fact that in these regions it had undergone various phases of its history, it had not only adapted itself to the historical, social and political conditions of these lands, but also adapted itself the new conditions. This civilization was the fruit of that tree and both of these two were .actively in full harmony with each other

Noncreative Inharmonious Development

On the other hand, this proportion and harmony and the various phases did not exist in the other regions, including Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, the way it existed in Western Europe, although some Eastern European nations, such as Czechoslovakia, Eastern Germany, to some extent Hungary, and Poland belonged to Western Europe, were within its cultural domain or were directly and gradually influenced by it in the last and the present century or before the domination of the Communists. However, the fact is that the other Eastern European nations neither .belonged to this geographical domain nor to this cultural domain

This is truer about the Soviet Union. This country is like a continent of its own by

p: ۳۶

encompassing a major part of the two continents of Europe and Asia and including diverse nations, tribes and cultures. The non-Russian western parts of this country have culture and characteristics similar to Western Europeans and the Balkans while the people in the Asiatic parts have characteristics to the Central Asian, far Asian or (even Western Asian people.(۱

Although the entry of the modern civilization into these lands was not as problematic as it was coming into the Third World countries, particularly nations with the capable, long-standing living cultures. However, the entry of this culture and especially the way it entered were not without complications. More than being rooted in the contradiction between the value and the nature of the culture prevailing in these regions and those of the modern culture and civilization, these complications were rooted in the nature of renovation and reconstruction of the society in various industrial, economic and .social backgrounds for achieving the new civilization

The Marxist regimes ruling over these countries took responsibility for industrially developing and renovating and for modernizing their societies as pioneers of the new civilization. Their being armed to the modern values, which, in their view, were fully crystallized and manifested in Marxism, and their centralized military, political and economic power prevented the emergence of the reality of the local, tribal and religious cultures the way they were. The latter either had no chance of expressing themselves or, ultimately, if they were given a chance, it would be for providing an interpretation of their

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What maintained the stability and unity in this country was in fact the iron fist of the -۱ central government, the concrete and steel civilization and the Stalinist period, the October Revolution generation and the World War II generation, the bonds between the anti-suppressive idealist elements of the existing tribal cultures and the similar elements in the Marxist thought, which brought Marxism close to them, failure to realize huge industrial and economic and, consequently, the political and intellectual developments that mainly occurred in the late ۱۹۷۰'s and the ۱۹۸۰'s, all of which have undergone changes in the persent days. For example, see Goftogu ba Estalin (Talk to .Stalin), especially pp. ۲۴۳-۸۷

culture that would be in agreement with the Marxist dialectic logic, so as to accept such interpretation as the truest possible and to act upon the same, i.e. considering Marxism as absolute and setting it as the criterion for knowing the reality while at the

same time deeming it the best and the ultimate solution and publicizing and enforcing it with threats and force, moving the present living cultures to a state of latency by using force without defeating them absolutely or even weakening them.(۱)

The feel that some Eastern Bloc nations had not had a general active, creative share in the development and prosperity of the modern civilization, their probably being alien and contradictory to this culture, lack of any useful constructive experience in this respect and that this culture was made dominant in the form of Marxism—which is itself a manifestation of the modern culture in a form that the conditions in Western Europe in the mid-۱۹۰۰'s required or rather necessitated(۲)—by the military and political dictatorships made the regional and native cultures choose to be or forced them to be silent without having a chance to express themselves or to find out about the present conditions to adapt themselves to it.

Sensitivity to the Heritage

The pressure of the central governments on one hand sensitized the members of these cultures to their heritage and, on the other hand, the present industrial and economic developments provided and encouraged the background for thinking about themselves and their identity, which were manifested in such sensitivities—As we have

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۱- Especially see Impiraturi-ye Forupashideh (The Collapsed Empire), pp. ۲۴۷-۹۵.

۲- See Farasu-ye Marxism (Beyond Marxism), pp. ۳۰-۴۹.

already mentioned, the industrial and economic developments, contrary to what is often considered, in many causes make the people more interested in their heritage, be it religious, historical or cultural, in the long run.

Before these countries, generally, could experience modern history in the light of the modern civilization and to learn coexistence and thinking about the national interests in a healthy open environment without the pressures of the ruling dictators who were

armed with an ideology that claimed to create the promised paradise on earth, were forced to reconstruct themselves, and do this on the basis of an ideology with Marxist characteristics. Their economic and industrial development was not in line with some sociocultural development that could further strengthen the tribal heritage and the national understanding and unity.(۱) This problem indeed did not find an outlet so long as the iron fist continued to exist. However, once the pressure was reduced, reality .showed its face

This is one of the most important reasons that accounts for the lack of tribal unrests in the more developed and industrialized countries in Eastern Europe. The development and industrial nature of these countries are indebted to the pre-Marxist era. This means that they experienced the modern civilization in the freer pre-Marxist environment and achieved a desirable national and social unity in the process of this experience. This indeed does not mean that we should ignore the role of the other factors. Rather, what we are saying is that their industrial and economic growth is more

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۱- ۲-۱۳۰ .See Tabaqeh-ye Jadid (The New Class), pp

deeply rooted and more significant since it was realized in a freer and healthier environment and could bring about a more powerful social and national unity and .coherence

The reverse of this current can be seen in the separatist tendencies of the Soviet republics, the Yugoslav states and the tribal unrests in Romania and Bulgaria. The tendencies in the southern Soviet republics are subject to the same rule. Although the mechanism of action in the tendencies in these republics, since their residents are generally Muslims, is different from that of the Baltic republics, this difference is, on one hand, due to Islam as a religion with values different from or rather contradictory to the values of the modern culture and the Marxist heritage and, on the other hand, to the cultural essence that has been created and developed by this religion.(۱)

The present Baltic culture has grown and been formed under the influence of Christianity, mainly Catholic Christianity and partly Orthodox and Protestant Christianity. Therefore, it is more similar to the modern culture than the culture prevailing in the southern republics. Despite the fact that the separatist and independence-seeking developments in the southern republics are more of a tribal and cultural nature than religious, they are still different in certain ways from the radicalistic and individualistic trends in the Baltic region since they are Islamic rather than Christian culture.

What was said does not mean that such other factors as the political, international, economic or other factors such as seeking freedom and welfare

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۱- On the subject of harmonizing Islam and Marxism by Muslim propagandists in the Soviet Union and its short- and long-term results, see Impiraturi-ye Forupashideh (The Collapsed Empire), pp. ۲۶۱-۷۸.

at the same level as that of the Westerners did not have or hardly have a role in this respect. Rather, it means that one of the most important and sensitive ways through which the changing and epoch-making developments are manifested should be considered and that one has to know the causes and quality of its formation and what differences it had with the causes and quality of emergence of similar tendencies in the Third World. Now let's return to the main discussion.

Towards the Original Values

Thus, the tendencies towards the original values (radicalism) or, rather to say, rushing towards them began and, since this thought was the most progressive, the best justified and the most supported sociopolitical thought in this historical phase, many other persons who were somehow incompatible with the political ruling were attracted to it. It is exactly because of this reason that presently various forces have gathered around this sort of thought that have revolting and adventurous attitudes. These attitudes are commonly found in societies that have been rapidly modernized

and lack an ethical, upbringing and familial consistency. Such problems are well to be expected when the volume of economic, industrial and social developments are (beyond the capacity of a society.(١)

In order to properly understand the present situation of the political movements across the Third World as well as the Islamic movements, it is necessary to consider the abovementioned point. It is not so that all the forces within these movements believe or are committed to their goals. They have

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۱- This problem is the one of all ideologies that goes on for reasons other than being understood or loved. Marxism faced such problems in many Third World countries. For further explanation, see Idi'uluzhi wa Inqilab (Ideology and Revolution), pp. ۲۱۵-۶.

joined the movements because they did not find a more appropriate way to respond to their internal needs, the core of which is fighting the present conditions.

This current has numerous causes. However, all of them return to Islam itself or its exceptional characteristics. In the contemporary era, Islam was attacked and violated not only as a religion but also as the creator of the Islamic civilization, culture and identity. Therefore, the modern Islamic movement not only seeks to return to Islam as an ideology and a value system, but also emphasizes the Islamic heritage. The Third World radicalism and individualism in the contemporary history has manifested itself in the form of returning to the Islamic heritage, characteristics and identity.

Throughout its history, Islam was never under so much pressure so as to withdraw from the active social, political and cultural life. However, such pressure existed in the new period. This pressure not only was new and unprecedented, it was also contradictory to its inherent and internal characteristics. As other religions are not as extensive and radicalist as Islam is, they can better cope with the pressures of the new era and adapt themselves to it. However, this religion cannot and will not be able to do so. The great mistake of the Westernized Muslim analysts or the Westerners

observing the events in the Muslim world was that they attributed the Islamic resistance of the last century only to blind dogmatism and blind religion, which would gradually fade away. They were unaware

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of the very essence and substance of this religion and had failed to note that what is incompatible with the pressures of the modern era is the very essence and substance of this religion rather than their so-called reactionary dogmatism.(۱)

What misled these Westerners and Westernized Muslims was the reformist path that Christianity had gone and the other religions to a certain extent as well. They assumed that Islam as a religion would have to go on more or less the same path. Islam had an identity different from that of Christianity and had expectations from its followers that were appropriate for such nature. The condition of faith was faith in this religion and its entirety while it was an important point that this entirety could not be decomposed as in Christianity. Also, the time or the consensus of the followers at any period of time would not have any effect on its principles and limits as in Christianity. As this is an important issue, let's briefly examine it.

Islam, Christianity and the Modern Civilization

Concerning the clash of Islam and Christianity with the modern civilization, the problem is not just that this civilization was formed and grew within the Christian territory and, therefore, has been and is more compatible with it than with Islam. The basic thing to be considered is that Christianity as a religion could somehow adapt itself to the developments that arose out of the growth of this civilization and the new necessities that it had created in the various scientific, social, political and

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۱ - See the final chapter of the precisely written small book Muhammedanism by Hamilton Gibb, who, a long time ago, expressed the impossibility of the absolute retreat of Islam in the new period.

cultural and even moral and educational grounds. This adaptation was initially (indebted to the inherent characteristics of this religion.(١

Christianity consisted of a core, i.e. the message and verdicts of Jesus and the Bible and the Old Testament, which was later recognized as part of Christianity and its peripheral parts that had been developed and added thereto by the Church authorities and the ecclesiastical scholars so as to make Christianity a perfect and comprehensive religion that would take charge in all the material, spiritual, individual .and collective affairs of the followers throughout the Middle Ages

The Christian society governing Europe in the Middle Ages was like Islam governing the Muslims in that time. The two similarly responded to the various needs of their followers and actively participated in the various dimensions of their individual and collective lives, the difference being that the entirety of Islam originated from its substance, i.e. the Qur'an and the tradition, while only part of the nature of Christianity at that time related to the pure original Christianity. In fact, it was the consensus of the Church authorities and the ecclesiastical scholars that compensated .for the gaps and shortages to make it a perfect and comprehensive religion

Naturally, these two religions reacted in two different ways to the pressures that sought to fight them and force them to retreat. Here, it was religion itself that defined its principles, fundamentals and limits while, elsewhere, part of this whole was explained and determined by the prime religious legislator rather than

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The best example of such correspondence can be found in Vatican Council II, pp. -١ ٩٠٣-١٠١۴. The difference in Islam and Christianity before the modern civilization had its effect on their followers as well. In this respect, especially see Rowshanfikran-e 'Arab .wa Gharb (Arab and Western Intellectuals), pp. ١۴-٧

by the others who, although they were sacred and reliable, but yet could not be as important as the prime religious legislator. A more important point is that the validity

and authority of such people, more than rising from within the religion, rose from the consensus of the believers. It was the consensus of the Church authorities that put the saints and the clerics in such a position as to be deemed part of the law and of the religion.

In practice, these two reacted in two different ways to the modern civilization, which were in fact their competitor and even opponent. Christianity resisted for a while but it was a resistance that was against the natural course of the history and in vain, while finally it collapsed due to various causes. Undoubtedly, however, the most important cause was its vulnerability. It was this characteristic that gave rise to Luther, Calvin and the other founders of Protestantism. They provided a different interpretation and, despite all hardships and difficulties, they penetrated and went forward.

Is it not true to say that what they claimed was returning the pure original Christianity and truncate everything that had been gradually added by the Church authorities and ecclesiastical scholars? They stepped on the scene with this claim while the conditions were appropriate for the progress of such a thought. Therefore, it expanded rapidly and bypassed all the barriers. Such a phenomenon could not be formed and progress within the Islamic territory.

Although there have been many within the

Muslim World that have followed more or less the same goals in the last century while directly following Christian Protestantism or without considering it, they failed from the very beginning or they did not end up being successful.(۱) As we said, the main cause was the differing natures of the two religions. Religious reform in the sense of rejecting part of the beliefs and even the fundamentals of Christianity could occur in Christianity but not in Islam. A Christian could be a devout believer while putting aside the additions on the grounds that they were not from the prime religious legislator. This would not contradict his faith and purity of belief but a devout Muslim could not do so because the entirety of what existed and he believed in and committed to was from Islam rather than from Islamic scholars having reached a consensus thereon.

Islam, like any other school of thought during its history, had acquired many additions and there were many common interpretations of its principles and concepts that differed from what Islam itself had defined and provided. Many people rose to remove these additions and to reform these false interpretations in order to introduce it the way it had originally existed. However, this is different from the reforms that took place in Christianity or the other religions and was required by modern history .and civilization

This civilization sought the decomposition and retreat of religions more than it required their reform and modification. It wanted religion to put aside

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In his book The Future of Islam, London, ۱۸۸۲, Blunt believed that the future - ۱ .belongs to liberal Muslims; Islamic Futures, p. ۲۵

all its non-personal claims and to submit. This was its goal and Christianity and the other religions responded to it, to a great extent, positively. However, Islam could not and the reformist Muslims who had, as they claimed, worked for such a goal, failed. The present radicalist movement is itself the reason that reformist movements with such a claim and goal failed and their failure was more for ideological than political (reasons.(۱

The difference in Islam and Christianity and their specific attitudes towards the modern civilization is not simply because, for example, Christianity can have Luthers and Islam cannot or because a movement such as Protestantism can occur within Christianity and be victorious while it cannot be in Islam. Even the more radicalist branches of Christianity have a different attitude towards the modern civilization than that of Islam and this is all because of the internal natures and structures of the two. The comprehensiveness of Islam and its emphasis on the necessity of full and precise implementation of its orders and that the otherworldly salvation and even the worldly respect of the Muslims are subject to implementing the orders, unlike other religions or at least unlike their present interpretation, maintains its authenticity against the

.increasing and crushing pressures of the modern history

This is explained by Johnson from another angle, “Nowadays, Islam and the Western world have begun to clash with each other and are opposing each other. No other great religions have entered into such a struggle. Neither Christianity, which is

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In the last century, the problem was not only that progressive and modern thinking -۱ individuals rose while being inspired by or without considering the Protestantism movement so as to take a similar action. The more important problem was that some of these individuals were introduced by a group of people as being like Luther and said that they, like him, would achieve victory while we saw that this did not happen. One of the best examples was ‘Abd ar-Razzaq. Although his book Al-Islam wa Usul al-Hukm (Islam and Fundamentals of Order) is mainly based on historical and scientific facts, he could not find a proper position because of contradicting the fundamentals of Sunnism, as these fundamentals were not so as to fade away and be forgotten through time. It would be appropriate if I quote one of the best-known and most reputable periodicals of that time, i.e. the magazine Al-Muqtataf, on his book and the position of its author, “… The fury that this book aroused against its author, who is an al-Azhar cleric and a religious court judge, reminds us of the fury against Luther, the leader of religious reformation in Christianity, one whose deeds had the most effect on the religious, literary and material progress of Christian countries. In our opinion, what ‘Abdu’r-Razzaq has written will face the same that Luther’s writings faced, not because Luther and his companions were right in all that they said and did and again, not because we believe that what ‘Abd ar-Razzaq and his likes have said are right and devoid of any error, rather because the critical and skeptical position of some thinkers results in discussion and research, will draw the curtain aside and reveal the truth. We have not forgotten how they rose against Muhammad ‘Abduh, but they gradually calmed down until he was entitled an Imam and everyone followed him on his path.” Al-Muqtataf, October ۱۹۲۵, p. ۳۳۲, quoting the introduction by Muhammad ‘Ammarah .to Al-Islam wa Usul al-Hukm (Islam and Fundamentals of Order), p. ۲۴

part of the Western world and has been exhausted by modernism nor Hinduism or Buddhism, which are deeply spiritual and think of spiritual salvation nor Judaism, which is a small tribal religion. None of these religion leaders had such an effect on the West that could be compared with the influence of the caliph, Mahdi or the Ayatullah. The reason for this is that Islam has been clashing militarily with the West for ۱۵۰۰ years and the present situation is the continuation of the same."(۱)

Although his analysis and interpretation relate to the political and military clashes of Islam and the West, it is still clear that this is a clash of Islam as a religion that emphasizes its original values and the modern civilization that requires its adjustment and even withdrawal.

Further Return

Therefore, considering the inherent characteristics of this religion, one has to ask why it left the scene of history for such a long period or rather why it has actively come on the scene today. What we are witnessing today is in agreement and harmony with its inherent characteristics and what we used to see was an unstable, temporary complication, especially because no religion permeates the society and history so extensively and deeply and is capable of mobilizing the force of its followers for realizing its goals as Islam, and is, while its opposition to the West and to the outside of itself is, deeper and more serious than any other religion or school.(۲)

The present Islamic movement is in fact

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۱ - Johnsen, International Islam, The Economist, ۳ Jan. ۱۹۸۰, quoting Asaf Husayn, Islamic Movements, p. XII.

۲ - These facts have been hostilely and vindictively said by many Westerners. See Islamic Futures, pp. ۴۳-۴; The Dagger of Islam, pp. ۴-۹, ۶۹-۸۲, and ibid., pp. ۲۷-۳۵, in which the author gives a good account of the difference in Christian Westernists and Muslim materialists in the Arab World in the encounter with the modern civilization.

.Also see The Dagger of Islam, pp. ۲۷-۳۵

a manifestation of the resistance of this religion against the globalization of the modern civilization. Its first goal is to reject this globalization within its borders. This is a natural current. Lack of such a current would be unnatural and questionable. If the other religions and cultures did not have such a move, or theirs was not so deep and strong, it is because they have not inherently opposed the globalization of the modern civilization or because they did not have binding values and standards for their territory or because they could coordinate their values and standards with the value system of the modern civilization.(۱)

Indeed, one has to add that the internal developments of the Islamic society within the last century were so as to provide the necessary material force for realizing such a conflict. The events of the recent periods and the constant blows that the Muslims received from the modern civilization formed their thoughts, beliefs and personality so that they could employ themselves for such a huge movement.

The best way to investigate this is the study of Islamic thought in the recent era. In the first decades of the confrontation of Islam and the modern civilization, the Muslims were so terrified that, in order to defend their religion, they did not think of anything other than proving its similarity to the modern civilization. By the apologetic approach these people wanted to prove the existence of that similarity. The next generation expressed its beliefs more confidently. Its goal was

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۱- Concerning the encounter of Christianity with the industrial civilization and what message this religion has and can have for today’s humankind see the book of one of the greatest Christian scholars of the present time , i.e. On Being a Christian, pp. ۲۵-۵۱, ۸۹-۱۱۲, ۵۵۴-۶۰۱.

not defending Islam by proving its similarity to the standards of the modern civilization, the way its ancestors had done. Its goal was to explain it independently. The understanding and expression of today’s generation is principally different and

does not consider and is not satisfied with anything less than the full-fledged rule of its ideal and religion. In its view, it is Islam which is the criterion for truth or falsehood and it is the others that have to be compared to it rather than the opposite.(۱)

This development itself indicates a development in the mentality and psychology of Muslims, especially the Muslim youth and students. The important thing is that this set of intellectual and ideological developments was simultaneous and even in harmony with the social, economic and political developments of Islamic countries and, therefore, they increasingly reinforced each other until late '۷۰'s, when it reached the point of explosion and created a fresh current that continues to date. As we said, this movement is the politico-religious and sociocultural manifestation of the new period that encompasses the entire non-industrial world other than Latin America. The new period is mainly the product of its previous period, i.e. the period in which the dazzle, power and technology of the modern civilization terrified and threatened the civilizations in non-European regions and made them retreat while gaining a full-fledged hegemony. The new situation, which was accompanied by the hegemony of the modern civilization, was adventitious and unstable rather than natural and stable. The stability

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۱- The best example of this is the book Ma'alim fi't-Tariq (Worlds on the Way) by Sayyid Qutb. One of the primary important goals of this book is the final and at the same time bold and powerful rejection of those who, according to the author, are the weak-kneed failures trying to ruin the epical spirit of Islam by depicting it as modern and fashionable. Although the book was written as instructions for a pioneering group that was responsible for creating an Islamic society—pp. ۱-۵۰—its main mission appears to be a serious full-fledged opposition to whatever that seeks to ignore Islamic radicalism. Also see the introduction to the fourth edition of Al-Fikr al-Islami al-Hadith Wasalathu bi'l-Afkar al-Gharbi (Islamic Thought of Hadith and its Connection with Western Thoughts), whose author explicitly says, "The attempt by orientalists when they advise Muslims to adjust their religion to be compatible to the

modern civilization is indeed no less dangerous than Marxism. It is interesting to know that the author says this when Marxism haunted everywhere. To find lively and more revolutionary examples, see the various issues of Ad-Da'wah wa'n-Nadhir, by the Organ of Ikhwan al-Muslimin in Egypt and Syria, and especially the Organ of An-Nadhir.

was due to the fact that the old heritage had been forgotten without any reason and its inheritors had been forced to remain silent.

This state of being forgotten, which was often accompanied by humiliation, could not last for long. Yet, its termination required some backgrounds to be prepared. The backgrounds were prepared in the last century and matured and culminated in the recent two or three decades, thus the enterence of the Third World into a new historical period. This new period encompassed the Muslim World as well, but more intenesely.

Now, it is another problem what factors and forces the new period is influenced by and what its strong and weak points are, and how far it can maintain its stability, creativity and growth. If the radicalist ideology of the new period, of which the new period is a creation, can respond to the various needs of the Third World, especially within the Muslim World, in a way that radicalism, modernism and respecting the original values, while seeking reform, none is sacrificed for the other, it can then be said with certainty that this ideology will emerge the victor. Resorting to the original values without considering the various needs of the fast developing world today cannot guarantee such victory on its own. This is truer of our period, i.e. the '٨٠'s and the next decade, than of any other period in the past. Considering this principle not only guarantees victory for radicalist ideologies in the battle they have entered into,

it can also be said that the stability and continuation of the new period is indebted to the same success. The failure of these ideologies and their inability to respond to the needs and necessities of the new period will more or less coincide with the end of this period.(١)

The discussion that will be dealt with in the coming parts of the book has to do with the study of the political thought of the Shi'ites and the Sunnis. One must understand .both these schools and what their characteristics and differences are

Roots of the Ideological Differences

The basic problem in this respect is that the difference in these two religious branches is considered to be limited only to the caliphate of Imam 'Ali ('a). It is not the problem whether 'Ali ibn Abi Talib was the immediate substitute of the Prophet (S) or being the .fourth caliph. The difference goes beyond this

Basically, the argument is not about a person and who he was. It is about stature and about what the stature is and who can be given such a status. In other words, rather than being about applications, the argument is about concepts. The discussion is primarily what Imamate is rather than who the Imam is. It would be a mistake to reduce the problem to a set of historical events. The truth is that this concept affects .all the dimensions and angles of religious Shi'ite and Sunni thought

To put it more straightforwardly, the ideological, jurisprudential and theological ,structure of the Shi'ites and, consequently

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۱ - It is necessary to mention an important, although brief, point about the future of the present Islamic movement. Unfortunately, little has been said about this in a serious or realistic manner, which is one of the weak points of this movement. At any rates, we will try to elaborate on some points. One of the basic problems with the present Islamic movement is that it seeks to solve all the problems in the light of mere faith and devotion while almost ignoring the inevitable necessities of living in today's world and often fails to separate these necessities from the Western culture and civilization. The Western culture—it would be better to say the modern culture because it does not just belong to the West anymore, it is a global civilization and all have a share in it and its developments—is one thing and the means of living in today's world something else. No devout Muslim or any other devout person believing

in the One God can support this civilization in its full form. This is too clear to require any discussion or argument. However, one has to bear in mind that living in the world today requires the consideration of certain principles without which one cannot live or live a respectable life. Order and precision, hard work and perseverance, sense of responsibility and disciplinability, working conscientiously, manageability and obeying the law and not justifying it, taking responsibility and not irresponsibly interfering in others' affairs, being content with one's limits and not expecting beyond one's capability and capacity, adaptability and collective working and, finally, thinking based on science and reason and deciding based on calculations—indeed where one has to use science, reason and calculation—are among such means. If it was possible in the past to run a scoeity without these, it is not possible anymore. It is strange that Islam has clear explicit orders in all these respects. However, Muslims have lived in the past centuries in a way that shows that they are committed to them less than any other people or nation. This lack of commitment has many historical, social, moral, educational and psychological reasons that have to be studied. One of the most important reasons is a deeply individualistic interpretation of Islam by Muslims. A good person according to the past customs was one who, apart from regular worships, would do benevolent things as well. He would build a mosque, school, water reservoir, bridge and the like and endowed them to the public. Presently, having been influenced by social and revolutionary trends, people think of a good person as one who perseveres in the various fields of fighting the irreligious, the violators and the oppressors. Undoubtedly, these are indications of a true faith. However, the problem is that, other than such indications, the other manifestations of religious faith are basically not taken into consideration. According to them, criteria of being good is not, for example, doing one's duty carefully and patiently, with perseverance or trust or closely cooperating with one's colleagues in collective cooperation, which is a requirement of today's industrial life, and listening to one's superior or not avoiding doing one's work with different excuses and avoiding the interference in affairs that are not one's business. The fact is that such concepts are unknown among us and have nothing to do with religion or religious duty. One can even say that not only they are unknown, but, in practice, their opposites prevail and are considered as values. For example, if the concept of "cleverness" in our customs is analyzed as well as who

its applications are and what and who are the opposite concept and applications, it will clearly be seen how far the concepts prevailing in the minds, thoughts and spirits, whether individual or collective, are contradictory to the means required for living in the world today. Worse than this is that these applications have found religious positions for themselves and there are few people who would see them as contradicting the religion, faith and religious purity. Unless these problems are solved satisfactorily, the society will not be on the path of progress. As it was mentioned earlier, this is not just our problem. It is more or less a problem in all Islamic societies and for the present Islamic movement. Our problems will not be solved only by individually motivated devotion in the sense that is common today. No doubt, this is a necessary but not a sufficient condition. The devotion needs somehow to be related to the principles and values required by living in this part of history. In order for us and the Islamic nation to have a proud future, this relation is necessary, in a way that neither the religious fundamentals are distorted nor the concepts are degraded so much that any law-breaking, lack of sense of duty, disorder, laziness, carelessness, lack of knowledge and aimlessness is justified or legalized by any person. In the vast realm of the Muslim World, one can almost say that Islamic countries to the east of Iran suffer less from this problem and the more we go towards the east, this problem will be less noticeable. For certain reasons, Turkey and principally the Turks face this problem less seriously whether in Iran or outside Iran. In the Arab World, this problem is serious, complex and deep, as in Iran although this problem may be weaker or stronger in each of these countries, depending on their situation in the past, the solidity of their national unity, colonial experience and type of the present government. For further explanation, see Africa: the Past Heritage and the Future Situation, pp. ۸۱-۶, and also two books, one by the most prominent specialist in social, economic and cultural issues in the Muslim World, i.e. Diya' ad-Din Sardar, enitled The Future of Muslim Civilization and Islamic Futures.

their historical experience and psychological and social structure on one hand, and those of the Sunnis on the other hand, have been formed and grown under the effect of two different series of factors. The main cause of this difference is that the Sunnis understand, view and interpret Islam according to the version of Islam that was

realized at the time of the Senior Caliphs [khulafa-ye rashidin], the Companions [sahabah] and the Followers [tabi'in] while the Shi'ites determine Islam according to the recommendations of the Prophet (S) concerning his substitution. One considers Islam based on the early Islam while the other evaluates early Islam according to the .Islamic criteria and rules

In the one place, religion is looked at and understood according to history while in the other place according to religion. These are two absolutely different attitudes and understandings. It can be said that the main differences between the Shi'ites and Sunnis and the distinctions of these two as two jurisprudential and theological schools (result from the same current.(١)

When the early Islam history, especially the history of the Senior Caliphs is attached an importance equal to that of Islam itself, such Islam would indeed be different with the version of Islam provided by another group who, not only do not believe in such importance and value, but also have a critical attitude towards it. Now we see that the issue is more serious than it seems at first glance. The difference of these two is the difference in the interpretation

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Some scholars in the past and some writers today have intentionally paid attention -١ to this difference. From among the past ones, refer to Al-Fasl fi'l-Milal wa'l-Ahawa' wa'n-Nahl, Ayn Hazm, J.E., p. ٩۴. He says somewhere, "It is not right to argue with them—the Shi'ites—by relying on our own stories because our stories are not acceptable to them and they cannot rely on their stories to argue with us because we do not think they are true. Both parties have to argue based on something else which is acceptable to both sides whether the one who argues accepts it or not..." From among the new writings, see Ma'alim al-Khilafah fi'l-Fikr as-Siyasi al-Islami (Worlds of Caliphate in the Islamic Political Thought), pp. ١٣١-٨; and Al-Fikr as-Siyasi ash-Shi'i .(Shi'ite Political Thought), pp. ١١۶-٨٠

.of Islam

In one place, Imamate, caliphate, the Imam and the caliph are understood different from the way they are understood in the other. In one place, the stature and characteristics of the Prophet (S) is lowered to the level of the following caliphs while, in another place, the stature and characteristics of the Imam are raised to the level of the Prophet (S)—which is indeed natural except in the issue of revelation and prophethood. These two attitudes entail other issues that are mainly manifested in political thought. In other words, the political thought of these two sects more than any other discussion are influenced by their varying attitudes in their understanding .of Islam

Here it should be said that such discussions should not result in misunderstandings such as 'What does Islamic unity mean when there are such differences?', or 'Unity is a principle and, therefore, one has to avoid setting forth such discussions.' Firstly, these two sects and the general public within the Islamic sects, despite all the differences, have some essential commonalities due to the potential and the stable fundamentals of Islam, which makes it possible to stand in unity. Secondly, the religion itself has emphasized unity as a duty. Therefore, such doubts cannot be .raised in the first place

The problem is that, in order to have a proper analytical understanding of the past history of these two religions and their present conditions, one has to examine them very carefully and to systematize their diverse elements and factors in

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order to develop and determine their political thoughts. What was and will be said will .be in the employment of and will be targeted in this important task

Chapter ۲: The Historical Perception

Attitude towards the Early History of Islam

The most important factor in the formation of Sunni and Shi'ite political thought is their attitude towards the history of Islam. Indeed, the importance of this discussion is not that, with its help, we can find out about the fundamentals of political thought,

rather, it is the religious perception of these two sects in their entirety under the effect of this attitude; although the effect of such an attitude in the formation of their political thought is stronger than its effect in other issues.

The problem, as it was said in the previous chapter, is that the early history of Islam, especially at the time of the Senior Caliphs [khulafa-ye rashidin] and the Companions [sahabah] and the Followers [tabi'in] is of key importance to the Sunnis while, in the Shi'ahs view, this part of history is not distinct from the other periods of the history of Islam. This is not merely a theoretical belief, i.e. it is not that the Sunnis show a special religious respect to it while Shi'ites fail to do so. Its importance is because such a view has strongly affected the religious perception of the followers of these two sects, so much so that the Sunnis look at Islam, in its entirety, through this part of history because they consider it to be the realization and manifestation of

the teachings of Islam while Shi'ites, on the other hand, look at this part of history through Islamic values and, therefore, have a critical stance towards it. As a precise understanding of this is of the utmost importance for understanding the religious perceptions of these two groups and especially their political thought, let's first deal this subject.

Sunnism gives a special religious stature and even attaches a divine sacredness to the history of the early period, at least to the end of the Senior Caliphs. One has to see why, how and at what time this belief was formed and what effect it had on their religious perception and especially the political thought and their social and historical developments.

The fact is that the history of Islam—i.e. after the death of the Prophet (S) to the end of the reign of the fourth of the Early Caliphs, and Sunnis in general have a consensus that this period is of special religious value and importance—was not of special importance to early Muslims. Not only did they not believe in such a value, but they did not even distinguish it from other periods. Events that occurred later resulted in the formation of such a view.

In other words, the history of this period was realized in a form which was otherwise looked at in the subsequent periods, and these two were very different. The religious perception of the Sunnis and their political thought also followed such an attitude rather than the realization. Now let's see

what the story was, what its ups and downs are, where it ended and why it was so. To clarify the discussion, first let's study the quality of its realization and then the quality .of the formation of this attitude and belief

The main point here, as we said, was that, according to the Muslims at that time, there was no position or office and no individual, indeed with the exception of the position of prophethood and the person of the Prophet (S) that was sacred.(۱) We will later say that a small group of Muslims at that time put Imam 'Ali ('a) in a high position appropriate to what the Prophet (S) had advised. However, the caliphate and the caliphs did not have any special stature either. A brief study of the events of that time .takes us to this conclusion

Selection of Abu Bakr

After the death of the Prophet (S), Abu Bakr was chosen as caliph. He was chosen to be the caliph and to substitute the Prophet (S) in their worldly affairs—merely as the Prophet's (S) caliph and nothing more than that, i.e. to run the society and administer its affairs. Indeed, it shall not be noted that the worldly, social and political affairs of Muslims had a different meaning at that time from what it means today.(۲)

Islam at that time had created developments in the society according to its principles, laws and values and had founded numerous socio-religious, socio-political and economic-religious institutions that existed in practice. Abu Bakr was chosen as

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۱- The fact is that even the Prophet (S) himself was not that respectable and sacred for the Quraysh tribe. As it can be found out from their treatments of the Prophet,

they did not believe in the Prophet (S) like the other Muslims did. They considered the Prophet's stature and position to be much lower than the possible minimum with the Muslims in general. The following story is a good example of this. 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar narrates, "I wrote down whatever I heard from the Prophet (S) so that I could memorize them. The Qurayshis prohibited me from doing this, saying, 'Why do you write down everything that you hear from the Prophet (S) while he is a human being who speaks occasionally under a feeling of anger and occasionally under a feeling of satisfaction?' Then, I stopped writing and said this to the Prophet. 'Keep writing because I swear by God that nothing but the truth comes out of this' said the Prophet while pointing to his mouth." Masnad Ahmad, vol. ٣, p. ١۶٢. Another example is the same person—Dhu'l-Khuwaysarah—who objected to the Prophet (S) for not acting justly. Milal wa Nihal, vol. ١, p. ١١۶. These two and many other examples indicate this fact. However, later the Muslims raised the level of their belief, especially that of the Qurayshis, in the Prophet (S) to the level they themselves believed in, saying, "These people, as the close companions of the Prophet (S), must have had such a belief in the Prophet (S). To them, the problem was not what beliefs really existed. It is interesting to know that the Qurayshis themselves were put in the highest position by the Muslims in the later periods because the latter thought the former were the closest and the most loyal comrades of the Prophet. See Iqtida' as-Sirat al-Mustaqim, pp. ١۵٠-١۵, and Kanz al-'Ummal, vol. ١٣, pp. ٢۴-٣۶.

٢- Almost all the books on the history of Islam that cover the events during the Prophet's (S) life and after his death provide an very similar account of the story of Abu Bakr's selection and the discussions during the selections. This proves that the story is true. For example, see Al-Imamah wa's-Siyasah, vol. ١, pp. ٢-١٧.

caliph in order to undertake responsibility for running such a society, a society whose worldly and religious affairs could not be separated. All of these had an inseparable relation to each other. The important fact is that the Islamic society from the very beginning had been formed and had grown and its religious and worldly affairs had been intermingled with each other so that the Muslims of the time did not have certain conditions in mind for someone to take office in such positions. It was merely being Muslim and especially being at the top of a system that mattered.(١)

For example, the communal prayers and the Friday communal prayers comprised one of the socio-religious institutions of the newly-founded Muslim society. In the Prophet's (S) time, when he was present, whether in Medina, during a travel or a war, these two prayers were led by him. Whenever he was absent, they were led by someone whom the Prophet had appointed as the general or substitute. For example, during the war, the prayers were led by the army general and in Medina in the Prophet's (S) absence, by the substitute appointed by the Prophet (S).

In the same manner, as long as the Prophet was alive, the public treasury was controlled by the Prophet (S) while, in his absence, the army general or a substitute appointed by the Prophet would take charge. The same applied in the case of judgments and arbitration and in the administration of the political and military affairs. However,

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۱ - Islam founded a new society with religious as well as wordly values mixed with each other. Ahmad Amin a good explanation of how religion was realized, developed and continued according to the pre-Islamic heritage in Fajr al-Islam, pp. ۶۹-۹۷. Also see Al-'Aqidah wa'sh-Shari'ah fi'l-Islam, pp. ۹-۴۲, and Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam, pp. ۳۵۰-۵۱۰.

the tact that a person would be in such positions in those times did not indicate to the Muslims that he was of any special religious stature or position. The Muslims' experience when they were in Medina induced the concept that the ruler has responsibility for such position only on the ground that he is a ruler, no matter if the scope of his responsibility is wide or limited. Therefore, there was never the thought that having such positions would promote the ruler to a higher religious position.

In a chapter of his famous book that deals in detail with the currents that were formed after the Prophet's (S) death, 'Ali 'Abdu'r-Razzaq says in a part of his analysis on the events that led to the selection of Abu Bakr as such, "... on that day—the day of the Prophet's (S) death—the Muslims discussed the country, the government and the

state they had to form. This was why they used such words as state, statesmen, ministry and ministers and talked about power and the sword, respect and wealth, splendor and mastery. The reason for all this was merging into the ruling system and trying to form the government, thus rising to rivalry with the Immigrants [muhajirin], the Helpers [ansar] and the senior Companions. The outcome was allegiance to Abu .Bakr and making him the first king of Islam

If we take a careful look at the conditions in which allegiance to Abu Bakr occurred and how he was installed as caliph, we

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will see that it was a political and state allegiance while having all the characteristics of new governments; like other governments have done: based on power and the .sword

This was the new government that the Arabs founded. It was an Arab state and an Arab government. However, Islam, as you know, belongs to the entire humanity. It is neither exclusively for Arabs nor for non-Arabs. However, this was an Arab state that had been founded based on religious invitation. Its motto was supporting the invitation and rising for it. Perhaps it has a great effect in the progress of the invitation. Certainly, it had a role in developing Islam. However, despite all these, it was still an Arab state that would reinforce the power of the Arabs and protect their interests. It made others show deference to them on the earth, like the other powerful conquering nations... The perception of the Muslims at that time was that, by selecting him, they would establish an earthly civil state. This was why they .deemed it permissible to disobey and oppose it

They knew that their difference in this respect is a difference in earthly rather than religious affairs. They quarreled over a political issue that had nothing to do with their religion and would not shake their faith. Neither Abu Bakr nor any other of the elite thought that leading the Muslims is a religious position or opposing it would be opposing the religion. Abu Bakr explicitly said, “Oh people, I am

a person like you and I do not know. Perhaps you define for me as duty things that the Prophet (S) could bear. God selected the Prophet (S) from among the people and preserved him from harm and gave him innocence. I am a follower not a leader."

The New Rendering

Later, however, for numerous reasons, Abu Bakr's selection was given a new interpretation. It was depicted to the people as if he had a religious position and represented the Prophet (S). Thus, the thought was formed that ruling the Muslims had a religious concept and position as representative of the Prophet (S). One of the most important reasons based on which this thought appeared among Muslims was the title given to Abu Bakr, i.e. the Prophet's caliph.(۱)

It was based on such an interpretation of the ruler that the Muslims chose Abu Bakr as caliph. To them, he was an individual like others and had been chosen to a position that, in their view, lacked any religious stature.

Although this position and its duties and principally the new form of the newly founded Islamic society and its institutions were determined and defined by religion, this current meant to the Muslims of the time only that God wished the Muslims to live in such a society and conditions and it never meant that those appointed to such positions had to have certain religious qualifications. Here indeed the talk is about the image and perception that the Muslims had in this respect and not what, for

۱- Al-Islam wa Usul al-Hukm, pp. ۱۷۵-۶. For further explanation, see pp. ۱۷۱-۸۲.

example, the Prophet (S) had asserted. To comprehend the developments of those days, one mainly has to study this understanding and perception and the way it was formed and the influence it had.(۱)

The best witness to what was said is the way Abu Bakr was selected and settled as

caliph. Although his selection was generally accepted later and especially after pledging allegiance to 'Ali, on the first days it was subject to much controversy. His opponents, on one hand, were the Helpers, who did not want to accept the rule of the Immigrants(۲) and, on the other hand, the Qurayshis, on top of them Abu Sufyan, who considered Abu Bakr's clan to be too low to rule the superior clans of Quraysh and, therefore, sought to select 'Ali or 'Abbas, the Prophet's paternal uncle.(۳)

Another group was the Bani Hashim and the faithful devoted advocates of 'Ali, who opposed the selection [of Abu Bakr] merely on religious grounds.(۴) This was the only current that existed in Medina. Many Muslim clans outside Medina opposed the selection and were later known as the Rejecting Party [ahlu raddih]. Although some of the tribes really turned to apostasy and turned away from Islam, a group of them only objected to the way Abu Bakr was chosen as caliph, although the expediency of the time and, later, of the history required that they should be accused of apostasy as well.(۵)

What is of the utmost importance, however, is the controversial discussions between those who agreed and those

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۱- A small group considered Abu Bakr's caliphate to originate in the Prophet's (S) will. Hasan Basri, Muhib ad-Din at-Tabari and a group of the Traditionists are among them. Ma'alim al-Khilafah fi'l-Fikr as-Siyasi al-Islami, p. ۱۳۳. Ibn Hazm provides an elaborate and complicated discussion to prove that Abu Bakr's selection was a decree. Al-Fasl, vol. ۴, pp. ۱۰۷-۱۱. The critique of this theory can be found in Al-Islam wa Usul al-Hukm, pp. ۱۷۲-۳, and a more scientific critique of it in An-Nazm al-Islamiyyah, pp. ۸۴-۵. It is interesting to know that ibn Juzzi, who is a well-known Granadan scholar of the ۸th century, attributes both Abu Bakr's and 'Umar's appointments to caliphate to the Prophet's (S) will. See his book Al-Qawanin al-Fiqhiyyah, p. ۱۷.

۲- Concerning the opposition of the Helpers to Abu Bakr's selection, see Al-Imamah wa's-Siyasah, pp. ۵-۱۰, and Abu Bakr's and 'Umar's Responses to the Helpers, pp. ۶-۷.

Upon Abu Bakr's nomination, Abu Sufyan said, "O', the children of 'Abd Manaf, will -٣ you consent if one from the Tamim tribe rules you? I swear by God that I will fill .Medina with warriors and horses." Mawaqif, p. ۴۰۱

Concerning the opposition of Bani Hashim, see Al-Imamah wa's-Siyasah, pp. ۴, ۱۰, -۴ ۱۳-۱۶. What 'Ali later said about the cause of his resistance shows that he had more supporters and Abu Bakr had more opponents. For example, see his sermon in Al-.Gharat, vol. ۱, p. ۳۰۲, and also his words in Kashf al-Muhajjah by Sayyid ibn Tawus

Many of those who were accused of apostasy and known as the Rejecting Party -۵ [ahl raddih] were not in fact apostates. They politically rejected Abu Bakr rather than rejecting Islam. In this respect, especially see Al-Islam wa Usul al-Hukm, pp. ۱۷۷-۸۰, and also An-Nass wa'l-Ijtihad, pp. ۱۳۶-۵۰, and Fajr al-Islam, pp. ۸۰-۱. To find out about the views and the analysis of those who consider all the Rejecting People as apostates and defend Abu Bakr's actions, see Al-Bid'ah: Tahdiduha wa Mawqif al-Islam minha, pp. ۳۲-۳. The writer, 'Izzat 'Ali 'Atiyyah elaborately mentions the .documents of this story

who disagreed on the Abu Bakr issue. Other than a small minority that advocated 'Ali ('a) and emphasized the Prophet's ('a) advices and 'Ali's ('a) religious merits for the position and basically the importance of this position, what others said focused on a different argument. The argument was not what the Prophet's ('a) succession meant and what characteristics and qualifications it required and who could and should succeed him. Every group supported their own candidate. In other words, the issue had been reduced to a mere political and tribal competition with no religious (element.(۱

As we said, only the opposition of 'Ali ibn Abi Talib and his advocates had a religious element in itself. Their point, which was in the later periods explained by Imam 'Ali himself in greater detail—especially during his caliphate, an example of which is the Shiqshiqiyyah Sermon [khutbah Shiqshiqiyyah]—was, first of all, why the repeated advices of the Prophet (S) were ignored and, secondly, the person to be appointed to such a position required qualifications that could only be found in Imam 'Ali ('a). (Therefore, any person other than him lacked such qualifications.(۲

Addressing those who had surrounded Abu Bakr to pledge allegiance to him, Imam ‘Ali (‘a) said, “I swear by God, o’ the Immigrants! Do not take power and reign out of the Prophet’s house to put in your own houses. Do not prohibit the right persons from caliphate or what they deserve. O’ Immigrants! I swear by God, we are the most rightful of the

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۱- For example, see the arguments of the supporters and opponents of the selection of Abu Bakr in Al-Imamah wa’s-Siyasah, pp. ۴-۱۶.

۲- The argument that the caliphate and the Imamate requires people of a certain stature and only an individual like ‘Ali deserves them was not only said by ‘Ali but was also expressed later by the next Imams in other ways. For example, see Imam Hasan’s letter to Mu‘awiyah in Nazariyyah al-Imamah ‘inda ash-Shi‘ah al-Imamiyyah, pp. ۳۱۸-۹. On the qualifications of an Imam, see Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah by Ibn Abi al-Hadid, vol. ۸, p. ۲۶۳.

people thereto. We are the Prophet’s Household and deserve it more than you. Is it not true that he who recites the Book, he who is a jurisprudent in God’s religion and aware of the Prophet’s tradition and aware of the people’s affairs and turns away the bad and divides equally is among us? I swear by God that he is among us. Do not be capricious or else you will lose the God’s way and deviate from the truth.”(۱)

Tribal Rivalry

This was a word with a different tone. Others, while defending themselves, pointed to things other than the necessary qualifications and merits for such a position. Inter-tribal competition had been revived and everybody talked of and emphasized it. On the one hand, there was rivalry between the Immigrants and the Helpers and, on the other hand, there was competition within the Immigrants, each of whom had sought a certain person’s support. The Umayyad had surrounded ‘Uthman while Bani Zuhrah had gathered around ‘Abdu’r-Rahman ibn ‘Awf and Bani Hashim around ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib.(۲)

Abu Sufyan, who was not satisfied with Abu Bakr's caliphate, well depicts the conditions at that time in a brief sentence, "I swear by God, I see a cloud of dust—which means the cloud of dust that is created during the war and attack under hooves of animals—which will be settled only by blood. O' the children of 'Abd Manaf! Why should Abu Bakr be in charge of your destiny? Where are the two who were held weak

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۱- The full text of the speech of the Imam can be found in Al-Imamah wa's-Siyasah, vol. ۱, p. ۱۲. It is interesting to know that, after his speech ended, Bashir ibn Sa'd, the great rival of Sa'd ibn 'Ibadah, said, "If the Helpers had heard this from you before they swore allegiance to Abu Bakr, they would have never stopped or disputed allegiance to you." Bashir was the chief of the Aws tribe and, because of his cooperation in the allegiance, 'Umar during his caliphate gave a greater share to the Aws members than to the Khazrajis. See Thawrat al-Husayn by Muhammad Mahdi Shams ad-Din, p. ۱۶.

۲- "The Bani Hashim had surrounded 'Ali ('a) and they were accompanied by Zubayr... Bani Umayyah had surrounded 'Uthman and Bani Zuhrah had surrounded Sa'd and 'Abdu'r-Rahman 'Awf..." Al-Imamah wa's-Siyasah, pp. ۱۰-۱۱.

and humiliated? Where are 'Ali and Abbas?"(۱)

Nevertheless, in those days, the situation was such that 'Ali's ('a) opposition was outshone by that of Fatimah ('a), because, if 'Ali ibn Abi Talib had insisted on his opposition, he would have been attacked—as he was frankly told, "If you express opposition, you will be killed."—while the special position of Fatimah Zahra' ('a), who was a woman as well as the Prophet's (S) only child, had some sort of security. Therefore, Imam 'Ali swore allegiance after his wife [Fatimah] testified. Naturally, the other members of Bani Hashim and his special companions followed him in doing this.(۲)

Such were the conditions in which Abu Bakr was installed as caliph. The quality of this

selection and the nature of the speeches for approving or rejecting it indicate the mentality of the Muslims at that time about the issue of caliphate. Although Abu Bakr was a well-known person, what led to his appointment as caliph was not his religious characteristics or stature, which was later much elaborated on and on which much was forged for different motivations. Rather, it was the simple perception of the Muslims about the Prophet's succession. To them, the Muslims did not attach any special religious status to this position.(۳)

In the meanwhile, there were indeed other factors that were involved, the most important ones of which were probably the threats from outside the society in Medina, including the revolts by the Rejecting Party and the subsequent tensions among the southern and central

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۱- Tabari, vol. ۳, p. ۱۹۷.

۲- Ibn Qutaybah thus tells the story of how they made 'Ali ('a) swear allegiance, "After they twice sent a person to 'Ali to ask him for allegiance, 'Umar and a group of people went to his house and took him to Abu Bakr, telling him, 'Pledge allegiance.' He said, 'What will happen if I don't?' He said, 'We swear by God that we will cut off your head.' He said, 'Then you will have killed a servant of God and the brother of God's Prophet.' 'Yes, God's servant but not the Prophet's brother.' said 'Umar. Abu Bakr was still silent. 'Umar asked him to make 'Ali pledge allegiance. He said in response, 'As long as Fatimah is by his side, I will not force him to do anything.' Al-Imamah wa's-Siyasah, vol. ۱, p. ۱۳. Ibn Qutaybah gives an elaborate account of the story, then says, "'Ali did not pledge allegiance to Abu Bakr until Fatimah died." Ibid., p. ۱۴. Also see, Riyahin ash-Shari'ah, vol. ۲, pp. ۳-۴۱.

۳- The most important or rather the only argument in those days was that the Arabs would not bow to non-Qurayshis. Al-Imamah wa's-Siyasah, pp. ۶, ۸. Later, in the first sermon that he delivered in Medina after his last trip from Mecca, 'Umar gave an elaborate account of how Abu Bakr was selected as caliph and of the events of those days. See Masnad by Ahmad ibn Hanbal, vol. ۱, pp. ۵۵-۶.

Arabian tribes, which had for a while seriously threatened Medina. The Rejecting Party here means those who actually rejected Islam and intended to attack Medina not those who were thus named because of rejecting Abu Bakr's caliphate. The second danger was Rome and Iran [formerly Persia], the former being very serious, thus attracting attention to the outside and causing the internal differences to be forgotten, at least temporarily, and making the Muslims devote their attempts to protecting their existence.

To clarify the disorderly suspenseful conditions of those days, it will suffice to say that, only in the suppression of the apostates, more than ۱,۲۰۰ Muslims, some of whom could recite and had memorized the Qur'an,(۱) were killed.(۲) Considering the limited population of Medina and the entire Muslims at that time, this figure can well indicate how disorderly and worrying the situation was at the time.(۳)

During Abu Bakr's caliphate, the Rejecting Party's revolt was suppressed and the internal conditions in Arabia became peaceful. Yet, the foreign threats were still in place and worried the Muslims, especially because the vassals of the two great powers of that time were in the neighborhood of the Muslims and might attack them at any time.(۴)

Apart from this, on the last days of his life, the Prophet (S) equipped an army led by Usamah bin Zayd for fighting the Romans. Although the main intention of the Prophet (S) had probably been to keep away from Medina those who were likely to prepare the ground from deviating

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۱- ۱,۲۰۰ Muslims were martyred in Yamamah, ۲۳ of whom were from Quraysh and ۷۰ from the Helpers. At-Tanbih wa'l-Ishraf, p. ۲۴۸.

۲- After the Yamamah war, 'Umar, whose brother Zayd had also been killed in the war, thus said to Abu Bakr, "A large number of the Qur'an Readers [qurra'] were killed in the Yamamah war. I fear that all the Readers may be killed in the other wars and most of the Qur'an be lost. I think of collecting the Qur'an..." Al-'Awasim min al-

.Qawasim, p. ۶۷. For various documents and quotes on this, see the footnotes

۳- Regarding the apostates who rejected Islam and seriously threatened Medina, see the well-written elaborate argument in Muir, The Caliphate, pp. ۱۱-۴۱۰; also, At-Tanbih .wa'l-Ishraf, p. ۲۴۷-۵۰

۴- What kept the Muslims busy was the continuous wars because, in those days, they .were busy fighting Rome and Iran. Al-Milal wa'n-Nihal, vol. ۱, p. ۱۸

from his will on the issue of caliphate and Imamate, there was, however, danger from Rome's side that threatened the Muslims even during the Prophet's (S) lifetime. After releasing himself of the Rejecting Party, Abu Bakr sent an army led by Usamah to fight the Romans. This event, as he himself declared, was mainly an act to follow the Prophet (S) rather than to fight a real threat, although such a threat existed and had (been a disturbing one.(۱

Umar's Time'

Abu Bakr died in such conditions. 'Umar was selected as caliph following Abu Bakr's will. Caliphate was established for him for the same reason as it had been for his predecessor. The people expected him to undertake their worldly affairs and just that. 'Umar accepted to fulfill such a role and was thus accepted. There were many reasons why he was accepted peacefully and without any objection. It was partly because of the conditions in those days and the experience of Abu Bakr's succession while also partly due to his personal characteristics.(۲) There was yet no religious stature although much was said in this respect later. He neither considered himself to .have any religious stature nor provided any proof to this end

The people of his time also did not consider such stature for him and did not consider his rise to power to be due to such reasons although, as a ruler, 'Umar enjoyed the most religious and worldly advantages that a ruler could enjoy due to his position. However, this

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۱ - Kanz al-'Ummal, vol. ۵, p. ۶۵۸; also, Al-'Awasim min al-Qawasim, p. ۴۵. More

.documents can be found in these footnotes about the event and the various accounts

The fact is that the substitution of ‘Umar was not without tension. Ibn Qutaybah - ٢ says, “When Abu Bakr was ill, the illness with which he died, a group of the Companions went to visit him. ‘Abdu’r-Rahman ibn ‘Awf addressed him and said, “How are you, the caliph of the Prophet? I hope you will get well and be cured.” “Do you think so?” Abu Bakr replied. “Yes,” he said. Abu Bakr said, “I swear by God that I feel heavy and have a severe pain, yet what I see from the side of you, the Immigrants, is much more painful to me. I entrusted your affairs with him who is the best of the people with me, but you are arrogant and disobedient and want to take charge. This is because of the worldly prosperities you see…” Al-Imamah wa’s-Siyasah, vol. ١, p. ١٨; Sharh Ibn Abi al-Hadid, vol. ٢٠, p. ٢٣; Al-Milal wa’n-Nihal, vol. ١, p. ٢٥. Ibn Abi al-Hadid also tells of Talhah’s explicit opposition, “When Abu Bakr selected ‘Umar, Talhah said, ‘How would you respond to God, if he asks from his people now that you made a strict person govern them?’ Abu Bakr said, ‘Have me sit up. Are you warning me to fear God? If He asks me, I will say, ‘I made the best one of your people to govern them.’ and Abu Bakr then reproved him.” (Ibid., p. ٢۴). According to the accounts of this as provided in Kanz al-‘Ummal, others apart from Talhah opposed this selection. According to one account by a Companion, ‘Abdu’r-Rahman ibn ‘Awf and ‘Uthman entered Abu Bakr’s meeting and talked to him in private. Then, a number of people entered to object to him for his appointment of ‘Umar because of the latter’s roughness. Kanz al-‘Ummal, vol. ۵, p. ۶٧۵. According to another account, when Abu Bakr’s will to appoint ‘Umar as caliph was written, Talhah went to Abu Bakr and said, “I am talking on behalf of those who object to your appointment. Why did you select ‘Umar who is a strict and rough person?” Ibid., p. ۶٧٨. After being appointed to caliphate, ‘Umar ascended the rostrum and said, “O’ God, I am a rough person, make me milder, I am weak, make me stronger, I am stingy, make me generous.” Ibid., p. ۶٨۵. His sermon shows that such objections really existed and were even public. Apart from these, there were also other factors that were involved. Ibn Abi’l-Hadid says, “In his terminal illness, Abu Bakr said to the Companions, ‘When I selected the best one of you, everyone of you was arrogant and wanted himself to be the one because of the worldly prosperities you saw. I swear by God that you will have .curtains of brocade and fabrics of silk.’” Sharh Ibn Abi’l-Hadid, vol. ٢٠, p. ٢۴

did not yet have anything to do with his religious stature. These advantages were due to ruling in a government rather than to the religious capacities of the ruler. Doubtless, 'Umar's personal characteristics had a much more important and effective role in his ascension to and continuation of his powerful ruling than his religious (position.(۱

His acceptance was in fact the continued acceptance of Abu Bakr and the product of recognizing the same method although Abu Bakr had been selected and 'Umar's caliphate was a result of the former one's will. Yet, what is important is that, while selecting Abu Bakr, the issue of the Prophet's (S) succession was set forth in a way as to leave the way open for 'Umar's caliphate. Apart from this, Abu Bakr's caliphate was in fact the caliphate of three persons at the top of whom was Abu Bakr. The other two persons were 'Umar and Abu 'Ubaydah Jarrah. Interestingly, in the last moments of his life, 'Umar was sorry why Abu 'Ubaydah was not alive and said that, had he been (alive, he would have selected him to the position.(۲

His personal characteristics indeed had a critical role. He was a man that knew the Arabs very well and knew how to lead them. After being appointed to caliphate, he said to the people, "An Arab is like a tamed camel that follows his guide. Wherever the guide takes him, he will follow. However, I swear by the God of Ka'bah that I will take

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Contrary to Abu Bakr, 'Umar considered himself competent to make laws. - ۱ However, as one can find out from his words and deeds, he considered this to be due to his being the ruler of the Muslims not, for example, because of his personal or religious stature. His son, 'Abdullah, says that one day, in a place near Bayt al-Muqaddas (Jerusalem), he said to the Muslims, "O' people, I am in such a position among you that the Prophet was among us." Sunan at-Tirmidhi, vol. ۴, p. ۴۶۵. He later showed that he really considered himself to be in such a position as a ruler. Regarding those of his actions that were based on such an attitude, see An-Nass wa'l-Ijtihad, pp. ۱۴۸-۳۸۳. The jurisprudents and theologians of the later periods defined and developed governmental orders based on such a stature that 'Umar and the other caliphs

considered themselves as having, as well as on other grounds. In this respect, see Al-Ahkam fi Tamyiz al-Fatawi 'an al-Ahkam by Ahmad ibn Idris Qarafi, pp. ٣٩٠-٦, Khasa'is at-Tashri' al-Islami fi's-Siyasah wa'l-Hukm, pp. ٣١٠-٩ and Al-I'tisam by Shatibi, vol. ٢, pp. ١٢١-٢.

٢ - As an example, when 'Umar put 'Ali ('a) under pressure to make him pledge allegiance to Abu Bakr, 'Ali said, "Do this because you will have a share of it. Consolidate his building today because you will inherit it tomorrow." Al-Imamah wa's-Siyasah, vol. ١, p. ١١. When selecting his substitute, 'Umar said, "If Abu-'Ubaydah was alive, I would select him to this position." (Ibid., p. ٢٣). It is interesting to note that, from among those who had died, Abu-'Ubaydah was the first one whom 'Umar mentioned and sighed that he was not alive.

you to the way I want."(١)

A more important fact to consider is that he entered the scene exactly at a time when the society needed an individual with his characteristics. No doubt, had he ascended to power at a sooner or a later time, he would have either been defeated or at least would have not have been in such a position. He was lucky because he stepped on to power at the right time, at a time when the conditions were proportionate to and harmonious with his mental and ethical characteristics. He was not one who could rule other than the way he did. His rule was the natural outcome of the realization of his characteristics. It was his nature that was in harmony with his zeitgeist and, since his politics were a creation of his nature, it was in harmony with the needs of his time. His strict spirit left no place for political maneuver and the latter was actually not much needed. Neither the Muslim society nor the Arabs at that time had any interest in such a method. The caliph was mentally and ethically a man like the mass of the people of his time and this was the key to his success.(٢)

Extraterritorial Threats

The extraterritorial threats were still in place at this time, and perhaps more strongly so. If there was no opponent within Arabia, Iran and Rome had become sensitive to the increasing power of the new religion and system. Iran showed more sensitivity in

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۱- Min Usul al-Fikr as-Siyasi al-Islami, p. ۳۴۷.

۲- This can be found out by considering the personal and moral characteristics of the second caliph and the psychological, upbringing and moral characteristics of the Arabs at the Prophet's (S) time and a short while before and after that. For example, see Kanz al-'Ummal, vol. ۵, pp. ۶۷۴-۸۷, and also Umar ibn al-Khattab by 'Abdu'l-Karim al-Khatib, pp. ۴۲-۵۲, ۳۷۱-۴۴۰. Also see his advice to the caliph after himself, which indicates his spiritual and psychological sensitivities, tendencies and thoughts. Al-Bayan wa't-Tabyin, vol. ۲, pp. ۴۷-۸.

meanwhile and the Muslims were seriously threatened.

In such conditions, public opinion was naturally focused on nothing but how to eliminate such threats. Again, the eyes were focused on the outside rather than the inside and there was no room for internal conflicts. The threats were so serious that 'Umar decided several times to go to war with Iran to promote morale of the soldiers, but each time Imam 'Ali stopped him. Apart from this, the wars of Muslims with Iranians or Romans in these days were mainly for eliminating the threats from the side of the latter rather than for any conquest and the prevailing feeling was based on reality rather than delusion. Such threats really existed and they considered themselves to be too weak to resist such great powers let alone defeat them, especially because the stories of punishments by the two powers, especially the Sassanid kings and their vassals in the region, were still vividly remembered and their dazzling splendor meant infinite power. A precise study of the historical documents relating to this period and the doubts as to take such action proves the latter statement.(۱)

The first military clashes between them and their neighbors were limited. However, they made them aware of the vulnerability, fragility and internal weakness of their opponent's system. What accelerated this current was the adventurousness of some

of the local commanders who were willing to wage and continue wars. In fact, it was they who encouraged and even forced them to wage an open

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١- Abdullah ibn 'Umar thus depicts the hard and threatening conditions of those days, "When the Prophet passed away, Medina became full of hypocrisy and Arabs became apostates. Non-Arabs were happy and had speculations of plots and said, 'The man in whose light the Arabs have got power has died.' Then, Abu Bakr gathered the Immigrants and the Helpers, saying, 'The Arabs have refused to give camels and sheep and gave up the religion and non-Arabs are considering attacking you because the Prophet passed away. Then, give your opinion because I am a person like you but indeed my responsibility in this respect is heavier.'" Kanz al-'Ummal, vol. ٥, pp. ٦٦٠.

all-out war with Iran and Rome. However, to the last moment of victory, he and many Muslims were concerned about a crushing defeat.(١)

This was the fact of the first half of 'Umar's life. What was later written about the background of his decision and that of the other Muslims to wage a war and jihad with Iran and Rome was mainly intended to depict their heroes as great and as powerful as possible. The fact is that the situation was different although things were different after conquering Mada'in (Tisfun) and Bayt al-Muqaddas (Jerusalem) and doubts and worries faded away and, from then on, they went on without fearing the two powers. Nevertheless, things changed in the second half of 'Umar's caliphate because both Mada'in and Bayt al-Muqaddas had been conquered, Iran and the Byzantine Empire had collapsed and the religious heroism and the social zeal had settled.

In the meanwhile, one has to mention the infinite plunder that no Arab had seen so far. This much wealth and the numerous captives who were of a higher culture and a more advanced civilization all of a sudden entered the plain primitive Arabian life and covered everywhere. Although the effects of such a massive sudden entrance appeared later at the time of 'Uthman, the second half of 'Umar's period was not unaffected by the consequences of this explosion. Despite 'Umar's strict attitude,

many events are seen at the end of his reign that indicate dissatisfaction caused by the changes and developments, to which

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۱- There are numerous accounts of the Muslims' fear of fighting Iran even in 'Umar's time. It is well-known that 'Umar feared taking such an action and, therefore, on several occasions decided to go to the front himself until 'Ali made some brief and clever remarks to clear his fear while preventing him from going to the front. Part of what 'Ali said is, "... Victory or defeat of the religion from the beginning was not because of the small or great number. This is a religion that God made victorious and whose armies got power from Him until they got there..." Nahj al-Balaghah, Sermon ۱۶۴.

he reacted sharply.(۱)

He was killed at the best time of his reign. If his caliphate had gone further, his power and influence would have been reduced because of the rapid developments that were taking place and he would not have achieved such a distinguished heroic position later given to him by Sunnis.

'Umar left power in conditions that were different from when he took power. At that time, the society was a simple one with no view of the outside world and the foreign threats left no room for competition or opposition. However, in this time, neither was the society the same as the previous one nor were such threats in place. The Muslims had gathered wealth as well as power and had become a great empire while being on the threshold of experiencing a new world.(۲)

This change and these developments had been very effective. Meanwhile, the elite, who were mainly from the Quraysh tribe, had been especially affected. In the last years of his life, 'Umar complained to them and even asked God for his death. Once, addressing a group of Qurayshis, he said, "I have heard that you have separated yourselves from others and hold private meetings, so much so that once often hears that such and such person is a companion of such and such. I swear by God this is not

to your benefit and to the benefit of your religion, prestige and respect. I see that your next generation will say it is the decision of

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To have an idea of the loot that was obtained in the wars with Iran or Rome, see -۱ Akhbar at-Tawal and also Al-Kamil fi't-Tarikh, vol. ۲, pp. ۳۸-۶۸. Amin quotes this book as saying, "The Muslims got a great deal of booty in the Jilowla' war which was more than in any other war. A large number of women were taken as captives. It has been said that 'Umar always said, 'O' God, I turn to you from the children of the captives of the Jilowla' war.'" Fajr al-Islam, p. ۹۵. In another case, Al-Milal wa'n-Nihal, vol. ۱, pp. ۲۵-۶, thus quotes 'Umar, "When the news of the Qadisiyyah conquest arrived, 'Umar said, 'I turn to God if I am alive and see the presence of your children from them.' They asked him why. He said, 'How would it be if the Arabic trick and intelligence of .the non-Arabs are gathered in one man?'" Kanz al-'Ummal, vol. ۵, p. ۷۰۲

Goldziher well explains the new experience, which was the result of the piled - ۲ wealth from the wars, by quoting the Prophet (S) (Saying ۳۶ in Al-Jihad by Sahih Bukhari. Al-'Aqidah wa'sh-Shari'ah fi'l-Islam (The Belief and the Shariah in Islam), p. ۳۴۰. Taha Husayn gives another account of the late years of 'Umar's caliphate as it .was during the time of the Two Shaykhs. Al-Islamiyyat, p. ۶۶۲

such and such person and Islam will be divided. Gather together and meet each other as this will contribute to friendly relations and will give you a higher position in the eyes of the people. O' God, they upset me and I upset them. They are tired of me and I am tired of them. I do not know which of us will leave this world sooner but I know (that one of them will take charge. O' God, call me to Thyself!"(۱

The New Situation

In his last years, 'Umar had to deal with such problems. His influence had been reduced, which was not only due to him in the new situation, but also because the society had been changed and the changes had entailed certain expectations and dissatisfactions, which he neither could respond to nor could bear. On his way back to

Medina from his last hajj pilgrimage, he addressed the people, saying, "I have been told that such and such a person—he meant 'Abdu'r-Rahman ibn 'Awf—has said that if 'Umar dies, I will pledge allegiance to a certain person... Be careful not to be cheated by being said that 'allegiance to Abu Bakr took place despite being sudden and not being planned for.' Yes, that allegiance was like that but God saved the Muslims from its evils. Yet, there is no person among you whom everybody would obey..."(۲)

The best evidence for what was said is the nature of 'Umar's will compared to that of his predecessor. Abu Bakr appointed 'Umar and

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۱- Min Usul al-Fikr al-Siyasi al-Islami, p. ۳۵۰.

۲- Sirah by ibn Hisham, vol. ۴, pp. ۳۳۷-۸, also Masnad by ibn Hanbal, vol. ۱, pp. ۵۵-۶.

this was accepted but 'Umar did not and could not do so. Abu Bakr ruled a uniform society and could easily have the final say and others would obey him, not because he had said so, but because there were so many things to worry about. Secondly, taking power in that time did not entail any advantages in their view. The caliph was an individual like the others. Everyone had a job and responsibility and his was the caliphate. In addition, in a limited poor society like that of Abu Bakr's time, the ruler did not benefit from any material advantages. Therefore, neither was there a war for power nor could there be such a war.

This was not the story, however, when 'Umar died. Neither the dangers nor the poverty or limitations were in place. It was natural that the influential individuals and groups would rise for taking power exclusively for themselves. If the caliph did not have any special advantages on grounds of being caliph, yet he would be in a position that could benefit from many things, therefore, everybody looked at the position.(۱)

The reason that 'Umar, unlike his predecessor, did not mention anyone in his will is most probably because of this. Otherwise, he was neither weaker than Abu Bakr nor could speak less effectively. The problem was that the situation did not have such a

requirement and he had cleverly found this out. Therefore, he was forced to make the exceptional will, an action in which no

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۱ - Regarding 'Umar's will and the conditions therein, see Al-Imamah wa's-Siyasah, vol. ۱, pp. ۲۳-۵. For the numerous problems and limitations that 'Umar had in appointing his successor, it would be appropriate if I quote 'Ali al-Wirdi's opinion. Indeed, because of his Shi'ite tendencies, he wants to say that, if 'Umar did not appoint 'Ali, it was in fear of the Quraysh's opposition. Here, the problem is not whether this theory is true or false. The important thing is to show the conditions of those days, "Nowadays, some think that 'Umar could have appointed his successor caliph and the people would have accepted and obeyed him. This is a superficial view. We do not know what went on behind the curtains on those days. If 'Umar had selected 'Ali as his successor, the Qurayshis would have indeed made plots and risen against him, whom they took as an enemy." He then adds, "It seems that 'Umar was wondering and wanted to appoint 'Ali as caliph but he saw that the Qurayshis would stand up against him..." Wu''az as-Salatin, pp. ۱۹۹-۲۰۱.

one imitated him nor could anyone have done so,(۱) in spite of the fact that he had such a powerful character in the eyes of his supporters that they tried to imitate him in many cases.

'Umar's son, Abdullah, thus recounts the story of his father's will, "Just before the death of 'Umar ibn al-Khattab, 'Uthman and 'Ali and 'Abdu'r-Rahman, Zubayr and Sa'd ibn Waqqas entered his room. Talhah was in Iraq at that time. He looked at them for a while and then said, 'I thought about you ruling the people and found no difference other than the one among you have among yourselves. So, if any division takes place, it will be from you. The ruler can be any of the six, 'Uthman ibn 'Affan, 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, 'Abdu'r-Rahman ibn 'Awf, Zubayr ibn 'Awwam, Talhah and Sa'd. Your people have to choose from among you. Then you 'Uthman, if the power will be yours, do not give Bani Abi Ma'it domination over the people. If you, 'Abdu'r-Rahman, are given power, do not give your relatives domination over the people. If you are in

power, ‘Ali, do not make Bani Hashim dominant over the people.’ Then he told them, ‘Rise to consult to select one from among yourselves.’ Then they rose and consulted...”(۲)

All of these indicated that the conditions had dramatically changed. There were more people who claimed caliphate and they claimed it more strongly while their supporters saw the benefits in defending them. Although such problems existed at

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۱- Despite the outstanding and special position of the Second Caliph and that in the following periods his methods were often followed, nobody followed his way in determining a successor. Despite the fact that Sunni theologians have specified all ways of determining the next caliph according to the First Caliph, they did not mention this method. Al-Ahkam as-Sultaniyyah, pp. ۶-۱۱.

۲- Kanz al-‘Ummal, vol. ۵, pp. ۴۷۵, ۷۴۴.

the time when ‘Umar took power, they were not so acute, dangerous and critical.

It has been quoted that Imam ‘Ali rejected ‘Abdu’r-Rahman ibn ‘Awf’s request to follow the way of the two former caliphs if selected, saying, “Time has changed.”(۱) Even if this is not a true story and has been made up, it at least shows the turbulent conditions at that time because every story that has been made up bears an element of truth. Otherwise, it would not be mistaken for truth.

‘Uthman to Take Power

Finally, ‘Uthman took power. His victory was not that of a person, it was, rather, that of a faction who had introduced him because he was the weakest and the least worthy for the position from among the six-man group that ‘Umar had appointed. To prove this, it would suffice to say that, from among the virtues that were later forged to attribute to the caliphs and for him for reasons that we will talk about later, none relate to his personal capabilities. They were entirely based on his relation to the Prophet (S) or his psychological experiences.(۲)

Although ‘Uthman was an unworthy and weak person, the problem is that the situation had changed even where it did not relate to his power and merits. Lack of a foreign threat, easily obtained massive wealth and the consequences thereof in a retarded tribal society that suffered chronic intertribal disputes, increasing factional influence which the caliph represented or was a puppet of and which only considered but their own personal

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Al-Fikr as-Siyasi ash-Shi‘i, p. ۲۴۸, quoted from Al-Falsafah as-Siyasiyyah li’l-Islam by ‘Abdu’d-Da’im Abu’l-‘Ata’, pp. ۳۱-۲. - ۱

Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Az-Zuhd, vol. ۲, pp. ۳۹-۴۳, and also Tarikh al-Khulafa’, pp. ۱۴۷-۵۳, and especially the footnotese by Muhibb ad-Din Khatib to Al-‘Awasim min al-Qawasim, pp. ۵۳-۵. You can find a fair and comprehensive critique of the sayings on ‘Uthman’s virtues in Al-Ghadir, vol. ۹, pp. ۲۶۵-۳۶۱. - ۲

interests. Lack of a powerful centrality that was accepted and respected by all, self-interest and recklessness of the state governors had created a complex situation.

The weakness of the caliph was an addition to this because the other claimers of caliphate were looking at the position greedily while considering themselves worthier and more rightful to the position. The situation had become so difficult that even the mass of the people felt themselves in difficult conditions and, after several times objecting, came to Medina to object to the caliphate openly, which did not work until all this ended with the caliph’s murder.

It would be appropriate here to quote Ibn Khaldun on the same changes and developments. Knowing his views contributes to the understanding of the early Islamic developments, especially from the middle of ‘Umar’s period onwards and especially ‘Uthman’s caliphate and that of Imam ‘Ali. Although this would be lengthy, we have to quote a major part of it.

Deep and Rapid Developments

thus they were away from material comfort and pleasures whether because of ... " their religion, which called them to avoid worldly pleasures or because of their Bedouin life and the violence and difficulty with which they lived and to which they were used to, as in the case of the Mudir tribe, which was in shortage of food and in living conditions worse than any other people in the entire world because they lived in Hijaz, which was void of any farm or means of animal husbandry and were away from the cultivated

p: ۷۷

areas and the crops that were obtained in the lands because they lived in remote areas. Apart from these, the crops of these areas were exclusive to tribes that had control of the areas, such as Rabi'ah and the tribes in Yemen. Therefore, they never reached for those prosperous areas and often ate scorpions and khabzduk—a stinking dirty animal—and were proud of eating 'ilhiz, which is the camel wool mixed on stone with blood and then cooked. In terms of food and housing, Quraysh lived in conditions similar to those of Mudir until the Arabs united under the flag of religion ".because God respected them because of Muhammad's (S) prophethood

Therefore, they led military expeditions to Iran and Rome and claimed lands that God" had granted them based on His true promises and took the throne by force and dealt with their worldly affairs. Consequently, they achieved welfare and power, so much so that the share of a single cavalryman from the booties in some wars amounted to ۳۰,۰۰۰ gold coins or something close to that. Therefore, they reached an unlimited wealth. Nevertheless, they were still violent on life, as 'Umar made his clothes out of patches of animal skins and 'Ali said, "O' you gold and silver, go and cheat another person." Abu Musa avoided eating chicken because it was not a custom among Arabs to eat chicken because of its rarity. Therefore, they would eat wheat flour with bran yet they were considered to be the most powerful people

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."in the world because of the wealth they had acquired

Mas'udi says, "In 'Uthman's times, the Prophet's Companions acquired a large" amount of property and land. When 'Uthman himself was killed, there were ۱۵۰,۰۰۰ dinars and ۱,۰۰۰,۰۰۰ dirhams in his treasury and the price of his landed property in Wadi al-Qura—an area close to Medina—and Hunayn—an area between Ta'if and Mecca—and other areas was worth ۲۰۰,۰۰۰ dinars while he had a large number of camels and horses. ۱/۸ of one item of the Zubayr's properties after he left was ۵۰,۰۰۰ dinars while he left, after his death, ۱,۰۰۰ horses and ۱,۰۰۰ female slaves. Talhah each day acquired ۱,۰۰۰ dinars worth of products from Iraq and more than this amount ."from the area of Sharat

There were ۱,۰۰۰ horses, ۱,۰۰۰ camels and ۱۰,۰۰۰ sheep in 'Abdu'r-Rahman ibn 'Awf's" stable. One quarter of his inheritance amounted to ۸۴,۰۰۰ dinars. Zayd ibn Thabit left so many gold and silver ingots that an ax was used for breaking them. This was in addition to the property whose price amounted to ۱۰۰,۰۰۰ dinars. Zubayr built himself a ".house in Basrah and other houses in Egypt and Kufah and Alexandria

In addition, Talhah built a house in Kufah and another house in Medina, for which he " used plaster, bricks and teakwood—which grew only in India and whose wood is black and hard and does not rot in soil. Sa'd ibn Waqqas built himself a house in 'Aqiq—an area in Medina, Yamamah, Tahamah, Ta'if, Najd, etc.—which had a high

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ceiling with large premises with crenellated walls. Miqdad built himself a house in Medina that was plastered on the interior and the exterior. Waya'li ibn Minbah left some land, water, and the like while the price of his other property was ۳۰۰,۰۰۰ ".dirhams

As we saw, the property and wealth acquired by the Arabs were thus and they" cannot be religiously blamed for this because their wealth was property that they obtained as booties and fay' and they were not extravagant in spending it. Rather, they chose the middle way in their manners and lifestyle. Therefore, having much wealth was not blamed on them. If acquiring a great deal of wealth can be blamed, it is because the owner chooses the extravagant way and deviates from the middle

".path

"Nevertheless, if the powerful go on the middle path and spend their wealth for the good and charitable purposes, increase in their wealth will contribute to doing good things throughout the world. As the simple and Bedouin life of that people was gradually forgotten and, as we said, they were influenced by statesmanship and power and their statesmanship contributed to their wealth, yet their domination over the conquered countries was not put at the service of doing bad things and they did (not go beyond the limits prescribed by the principles of the right religion…"(١

The Great Crisis

These were the conditions at the time of 'Uthman—and later inherited by 'Ali ibn Abi Talib. As we have already mentioned, these conditions were mainly caused by the

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Ibn Khaldun's Introduction, translated by Muhammad Parvin Gonabadi, vol. ١, pp. -١ ٣٩٠-٣. You can find in Murawwij adh-Dhahab, vol. ٢, pp. ٣۴١-٢, a detailed account of .what Ibn Khaldun quotes from Mas'udi

rapid consecutive conquests of civilized and wealthy lands of that time. However, 'Uthman himself had an effective share in making further severe this great crisis. Shahrestani, who is an ardent supporter of 'Uthman, thus sets forth the story of his becoming the caliph, his numerous mistakes, the people's withdrawing support from him and finally his murder, "Everybody swore allegiance to 'Uthman. The affairs of the society were put in order and, the call to Islam continued at his time as well. Many conquests were made and the Public Treasury [bayt al-mal] was filled. He treated the people well and generously until his relatives from the Umayyad put him on the verge of collapsing. They suppressed the people and he was suppressed as well. In his time, .there were many disputes, all from the side of the Umayyad

"Among these were returning ibn Umayyah to Medina, whom the Prophet had rejected and was known as "Tarid Rasul Allah" [rejected by the Prophet]. 'Uthman

interceded on his behalf during Abu Bakr's caliphate, but it was of no avail. 'Umar exiled him to ۴۰ farsangs [almost ۲۴۰ km] away from his residence. Also exiling Abudhar to Rabdhah and marrying his daughter to Marwan ibn Hakam and giving to him ۱/۵ of the booties from Africa, which amounted to ۲۰۰,۰۰۰ dinars.

He also returned and gave shelter to his foster brother 'Abdullah ibn Sa'd ibn Abi Sarh, whose killing was allowed by the Prophet. 'Uthman gave Egypt to him and Basrah to 'Abdullah ibn 'Amir. Then,

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there happened what happened and other things took placed by which he was troubled. His army generals were Mu'awiyah, the governor of Syria, 'Abdullah ibn 'Amir, the governor of Basrah, and 'Abdullah ibn Abi Sarh, the governor of Egypt. All of them disrespected and left him until his destiny of being killed in his own house came true."(۱)

The story of acceptance and killing of 'Uthman compared to the two previous caliphs clearly indicates that neither the acceptance of the caliphs shows that the people of the time believed in a higher religious position for them nor that such a position had any religious significance at that time. He was accepted because 'Abdu'r-Rahman ibn 'Awf, who had been made the arbitrator of the six-man group, chose him for the position and was killed because he did not listen to what the objectors said and he ignored his obligations and promises to them.

Public Perception

Now let's see who the objectors were and why they objected. They were Muslims from various areas who were fed up with the irreligious and reckless behavior and oppression of their rulers and took their complaints to the caliph while the latter did not pay attention to such facts. They called the caliph to religion and to protect the religious rules and regulations because they believed that the caliph had made his non-pious and reckless relatives and friends the rulers of the Muslims. This was actually the fact in practice.(۲)

The other trend of this objection indicates the perception of the

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Al-Milal wa'n-Nihal, vol. ۱, p. ۲۶. Concerning the corruption and recklessness of - ۱ 'Uthman's governors, see Fajr al-Islam, pp. ۷۹-۸۱. Compare what Shahrestani says here, which contains part of the most important critiques against 'Uthman, both during and after his life, with the interpretation, justifications and rejections by ibn 'Arabi in Al-'Awasim min al-Qawasim, pp. ۶۳-۱۲۲, and especially the sharper footnotes .by Muhibb ad-Din Khatib, ibid

One such example is Walid ibn 'Aqabah, the governor of Kufah. With his singers and -۲ female attendants, he would sit and drink wine through the night. Once he said four units for the Morning Prayer and, while genuflecting, asked for wine. When the Muslims objected to him, he said, "I will read more prayer if you want." See Murawwij adh-Dhahab, vol. ۲, pp. ۳۴۴-۵, for the story of the Kufis' objection to 'Uthman and his reaction and his being punished by 'Ali. Compare this with what Ibn Taymiyyah said when he gives an account of 'Uthman's reluctantly rejecting the objectors since he had given power to his corrupt and reckless relatives. Minhaj as-Sunnah an-.Nabawiyyah, vol. ۳, pp. ۱۷۳-۶

Muslims at that time about the caliph and even the position of caliphate. Their objection, in the first place, meant that the caliph deviated from the right path and he had to be reminded of this. Their subsequent insistence meant that the caliph insisted on his wrong way and, therefore, had to be resisted. This resistance went so far as to result in surrounding and finally murdering him. However, this was not yet the end of the story. 'Uthman had lost his position as a Muslim to such an extent that he was not (buried for three days and, after this, he was buried somewhere inappropriate.(۱

If the judgment of the next generations about him was to be affected by the way the Muslims treated him, he would be put in a position much lower than a regular Muslim. However, subsequent actions by Mu'awiyah for exculpating him and giving him sanctity were so that he was given a status equal to that of the two previous caliphs. This point has always been a weak one in Sunni theological and ideological

arguments. What practically put ‘Uthman in a status equal to the other of the Senior Caliphs was the propaganda by Mu‘awiyah and his successors. Those who have a critical attitude towards the early history of Islam have blamed him for the basis of the propaganda and the forged information as well as the unallowable actions of ‘Uthman. In the past, the Mu‘tazilite were mainly so and, in the contemporary times, religious

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The elaborate account of the Muslims’ objection to, surrounding and killing of - ۱ ‘Uthman and reading the corpse prayer on him can be found in Tarikh al-Khulafa’, pp. ۱۵۷-۶۴, Al-Imamah wa’s-Siyasah, vol. ۱, pp. ۳۲-۴۵, and Murawwij adh-Dhahab, vol. ۲, pp. ۳۴۵-۵۷. It is interesting to know that Ibn Abi’l-Hadid says, “‘A’ishah’s objection to ‘Uthman was so strong, explicit and aggressive that nowadays nobody dares to say that ‘A’ishah said so about ‘Uthman or she accused ‘Uthman of such things.” Sharh .Ibn Abi’l-Hadid, vol. ۲, p. ۱۱

intellectuals and those with revolutionary and especially military tendencies are (among such critics. We will later talk in greater detail in this respect.(۱

Nonetheless, the Muslims’ attitude towards ‘Uthman is the best example of their perception of the position of caliphate and the person in such a position. When he was chosen to this position, nobody objected. He practically received general acceptance similar to that of ‘Umar(۲) Therefore, subsequent objections were not due to lack of primary acceptance. Rather, they were because of his mistakes, which put him in such .a low position that everybody, even his friends and former allies, opposed him

The best reason is what Zahri, a first-century scholar, says in this respect, “‘Uthman was the caliph for twelve years. In the first six years, nobody objected to him. The Quraysh loved him more than they had loved ‘Umar because ‘Umar had been strict while ‘Uthman treated them gently. Then, ‘Uthman managed things loosely and assigned the affairs to his relatives and friends and gave away a great deal to them. (The people condemned this and opposed him.”(۳

If the caliph and the caliphate meant to the Muslims of those days what was later said they did, they must have not risen against him in that way, especially since ‘Uthman was one of the Senior Caliphs, i.e. he was among those who were later attached the highest spiritual and religious position. The story of ‘Uthman is the best witness to the fact that it was the Muslims in the later

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۱- Concerning the widespread actions of Mu‘awiyah to forge sayings on the virtues of ‘Uthman, see Sharh Ibn Abi’l-Hadid, vol. ۱۱, pp. ۱۵, ۱۶. One of the reasons that the Umayyad resorted to prove their legality and truth was that they were the religious and legal inheritors of ‘Uthman. The eulogists and poets of the Umayyad court had talked a great deal about this. This was one side of the issue. The other side was sanctifying ‘Uthman and using propaganda regarding his right and innocence. The higher his position was defined, the higher would be the position of his inheritors, while the other way round was also true, i.e. if his stature was doubted, the doubt would be extended to include the Umayyad as well. This was the most important factor in sanctifying the face of the man that did not have any special position or charisma in the eyes of the people during his caliphate. For further explanation, see Al-Umawiyyun wa’l-Khilafah, pp. ۱۲-۱۷. Concerning discussions that were later held on ‘Uthman and his comparison with the Senior Caliphs whether among the theologians or the Traditionists, see Sharh Ibn Abi’l-Hadid, vol. ۱, pp. ۶-۱۰, and also Al-Mawaqif, pp. ۴۰۷-۱۳ about the critiques of the religious intellectuals and those who had revolutionary tendencies, see Andisheh-ye Siyasi dar Islam-e Mu‘asir (Political Thought in Contemporary Islam), p. ۱۵۰.

۲- See the footnotes of Muhibb ad-Din Khatib on Al-‘Awasim min al-Qawasim, pp. ۶۳-۵.

۳- Tarikh al-Khulafa’, p. ۱۵۶.

periods that otherwise depicted the position of caliphate and the caliph and especially those of the Senior Caliphs while attributing this to the early Muslims or even to Islamic beliefs and they elaborated on this so much that it would hardly be doubted.(۱)

‘Ali and Accepting the Caliphate

In such a difficult situation, the unsatisfied masses went to ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib (‘a) and chose him to caliphate despite his initial refusal. In fact, this was the first time that the mass of the people decided on their own to pledge allegiance to the worthiest person. ‘Umar and ‘Uthman took to power because of the wills of the previous caliphs. The case of Abu Bakr was not like that of ‘Ali (‘a). A limited number initially pledged allegiance to him and the events that occurred rapidly—because of the covert and overt competition between the Immigrants and the Helpers and between the tribes of Aws and Khazraj as well as because of the foreign threats—stabilized his situation. It was perhaps because of this that later ‘Umar said on different occasions, “Allegiance to Abu Bakr was a sudden action not thought about and God saved Muslims from the evils of it. So, kill whoever wants to repeat the same.”(۲)

Imam ‘Ali took power in the worst conditions possible and had to bear problems in the causes of which he had no share. Basically, the people who went for allegiance to him in great numbers sought solutions to the problems. In their view, ‘Ali was the only person that was

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۱- Al-Islam wa Usul al-Hukm, p. ۱۸۱.

۲- This is a famous sentence quoted from ‘Umar. See Tajrid al-I‘tiqad, p. ۲۴۵, Sharh Ibn Abi’l-Hadid, vol. ۲, p. ۲۶.

capable of solving them. Almost all of those who swore allegiance had such an intention.(۱) The number of those who did so with the claim of ‘Ali’s inherent merits for the position of caliphate and for following the Prophet’s advice was small although ‘Ali could overcome the problems later even with this small group.

The fact is that none of the previous caliphs took power in such difficult conditions. After a while, the claimers, who were considering taking the position in the later times of ‘Umar’s period and had prepared themselves at the time of ‘Uthman, began expressing their opposition. Delay in opposition was due to fearing the large masses of people who had encircled Imam ‘Ali (‘a). If someone other than ‘Ali took power,

they would still oppose him because the society had been torn apart. It was as if everybody, or at least those exerting an influence, had lost control of themselves. They neither knew themselves or their status nor had an appropriate expectation from themselves or their society.(۲)

For example, consider the heads of the opposition to 'Ali. You can see that what they expected was far beyond their capacity or status and, if they did not share opposition to 'Ali as a person at top of power, they would oppose each other as well. Was it not Talhah and Zubayr who pulled on each other's cloaks when disagreeing on who should lead the prayer for the Jamal army and they lashed their horses on the face?(۳) Was it

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۱- "Those who pledged allegiance to 'Ali considered him the worthiest of the... Muslims to be the caliph, as the previous Muslims believed that Abu Bakr was worthier and, therefore, selected him and they selected 'Umar and then 'Uthman. Islam bila Madhahib, p. ۱۱۰.

۲- An example of such expectations can be found in the suggestion of Abu Musa Ash'ari in Murawwij adh-Dhahab, vol. ۲, p. ۴۰۹.

۳- Concerning the dispute of Talhah and Zubayr on leading the prayer and the army before the Jamal war, see Naqsh-e 'A'ishah dar Tarikh-e Islam ('A'ishah's Role in the History of Islam), vol. ۲, pp. ۴۸-۶۵.

not Marwan ibn Hakam, a member of the Jamal army, who was accused of killing Talhah for revenge; at least he expressed happiness over his death.(۱) Or could Mu'awiyah bear these or could these bear Mu'awiyah? Apart from these, was there not the probability that impartial influential persons who neither pledged allegiance to Imam 'Ali nor opposed him would rise against any other person who would be caliph? But, 'Ali's unparalleled personality and background stopped them from doing so although they did not stand beside him either.(۲)

The problem, as we said, was that the social, moral and psychological order had been

disrupted. The problem was not knowing themselves and mistaking their capabilities. The problem is not that ‘Ali could not put these conditions in the right order; no one else could put the collapsed society with individuals who had become rebellious in the right order. These individuals had to be stopped by force and military action. Unfortunately, however, after these ups and downs, this order and system was .established by Mu‘awiyah

Ali provides a wise brief account of the conditions at that time and the many changes‘ that had occurred. Once, when he was the caliph, someone ironically told him, “Why have so many people united to oppose you while they had united to support the first two caliphs?” ‘Ali said in response, “Because they [the first two caliphs] ruled people (like me while I rule people like you.”(٣

Sociopsychological Disorders

These were the facts. The situation had changed entirely. Imam ‘Ali’s problems were

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Concerning the killing of Talhah by Marwan during the Jamal war and a critical - ١ study of it, see ibid., pp. ١٧٣-٥; also, Al-‘Awasim min al-Qawasim fi’dh-Dhab ‘an Sunnah Abi’l-Qasim, pp. ٤٠-٢٤١, also an ornate rejection of this theory in Al-‘Awasim min al-Qawasim, pp. ١٥٥-٧, and especially the more ornate rejection by Muhibb ad-Din .Khatib in his footnotes on these same pages

Despite the fact that a person such as Sa‘d ibn Waqqas was not by ‘Ali’s side, he did -٢ not want to stand against him either. He rejected helping ‘Ali by saying, “I will not fight, unless you give me a sword that can think, see and talk to say that this side is right and that side is wrong.” Al-Fitnah al-Kubra, p. ٥. In the meanwhile, in talking about ‘Ali, he said, “After what I heard from the Prophet about ‘Ali, if they put the saw on my head so that I would reject him, I woulde not.” Kanz al-‘Ummal gives various .accounts and provides different documents of this story: vol. ١٣, pp. ١٦٢-٣

.Abdu’l-Karim al-Khatib, Al-Khilafah wa’l-Imamah, p. ١٢١‘ -٣

mainly due to these changes. The opening of a new horizon to a limited, closed and

poor society and converting its local government to a vast empire, which encompassed the Iranian (Persian) Empire and a major part of the Roman Empire not only created new complex problems, but more importantly, affected the morals, thoughts, spirits, expectations, ideals and wishes of the early Muslims. They did not want to or perhaps, because of their new characteristics, could not bow to the religious rules and fundamentals. They wanted a religion that they could interpret on their own, a religion that would serve their goals and wishes rather than the other way round. This is why they could not bear a person like Imam 'Ali ('a). An example of .this follows

During the war of Siffin, Imam and his outstanding companions were trying to prevent war by any means. One of such companions was 'Ammar. He tried to preach to Mughayrah ibn Shu'bah to prove the Imam's truth but the latter pretended he did not know what he heard although he well knew the Imam and his background and had even at the beginning of his caliphate told him, "Reinstante Talhah, Zubayr and Mu'awiyah in their positions so that the people would unite on pledging allegiance to you and the solidarity would not be disturbed, then you can do what you want." When he found out that 'Ali did not pay attention to this suggestion, said on the following day, "After reflecting on the

issue, I found out that I had made a mistake and the truth is what you thought."(۱) Imam said to 'Ammar, "Leave him, because he would not take from religion other than what would bring him closer to this world. He actually makes himself mistake (affairs so as to find excuses for his mistakes."(۲

Indeed, one should say that not only could they not bear the Imam, they could not bear any other person either. Their joint opposition to the Imam was actually because he had the power and did not pay attention to their unlawful and mainly impractical wishes. This was the cause that united them or at least prevented any clear difference between them from appearing. Such unity would indeed collapse in (sensitive moments and the disputes and tensions would appear.(۳

Nevertheless, during his caliphate, ‘Ali had to fight those who rose to fight him. The wars were a natural result of the complications that dated from the pre-Islamic era and had appeared from the middle of ‘Umar’s caliphate. This period ended by Imam ‘Ali’s martyrdom and Mu‘awiyah’s taking power.(۴)

There are many people who say that the problems during ‘Ali’s caliphate were due to his strict approach that was based on justice and the Religion. Although this is right, the fact is that all the problems were not caused by this single reason. The roots of many of them have to be sought in the evolved conditions of those days.

A full-fledged deep development had occurred that would drown anything and

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۱- Ibn Khaldun, Introduction, vol. ۱, p. ۳۹۸.

۲- Sharh Ibn Abi’l-Hadid, vol. ۲۰, p. ۸.

۳- The best example of this self-centered interpretation and such unacceptable expectations can be found in the arguments of Talhah and Zubayr with ‘Ali. See Naqsh-e ‘A’ishah dar Tarikh-e Islam (‘A’ishah’s Role in the History of Islam), pp. ۳۵-۴۱.

۴- Certainly, one of the main causes of the oppositions ‘Ali faced during his caliphate was long-standing hostility of the Qurayshis. He mentioned this on various occasions and complained about the Qurayshis. Once he said, “All the hostilities that the Qurayshis had against the Prophet in their heart, they expressed to me and will later do so to my children. What do I have to do with the Qurayshis? I fought them at God’s order and that of the Prophet. Is this the reward for him who has obeyed God and his Prophet?” Ash-Shi‘ah wa’l-Hakimun, p. ۱۷. The others had also found out about this. Once ‘Umar told ‘Abbas, “If it wasn’t for Abu Bakr’s decision for after his death, the power would indeed be in your hands and, if this had happened, you and your tribe would have not been able to live in peace as they would’ve looked at you like a cow would at his killer.” On another occasion, the Companion Jalil ibn at-Tihan told ‘Ali (‘a), “The Quraysh’s jealousy of you is of two types. Their good people want to be like you and compete with you in achieving high spiritual positions. Their bad people, however, are so jealous of you that it is a burden on the heart and destructive for the action.

When they see you have gifts that make you happyn and frustrate them, they want to get to your level and leave you behind while the target gets farther and farther from them and their attempts fail. As they fail, they stand up against you. I swear by God that you more than all the Qurayshis deserve their appreciation because you helped the Prophet and performed his right after he died. I swear by God that their opposition is to their own disadvantage. They broke their contract with God and His hand is above all hands. Nevertheless, we, the Helpers, use our hands and tongues for you...", Al-Fikr as-Siyasi ash-Shi'i, pp. ۲۰۴-۶, especially see the views of Ziyad ibn al-Gham Sha'bani (died ۱۵۶ AH) and those of Sha'bi in this respect as quoted by Muhibb ad-Din Khatib in the footnote to Al-'Awasim min al-Qawasim, pp. ۱۶۸-۹. The fact is that the Quraysh's opposition was not limited to 'Ali and included the Prophet as well, examples of which can be found in the late years of the Prophet's life. Shaykh Mufid quotes Imam Sadiq as saying, "The Prophet was told that the Qurayshis had said, 'Did you not see how the Prophet consolidated the power in his family? After his death, we will take it away from them and will transfer it somewhere else...'" Amali, p. ۱۲۳. Concerning the sarcastic remarks by the Qurayshis led by Abu Sufyan, to Bani Hashim, even at the time of Prophet, see the narration by 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar in Iqtida' as-Sirat al-Mustaqim, Ibn Taymiyyah, p. ۱۵۵, and also what Abu Sufyan said at .the grave of Hamzah, the Prophet's uncle, Qamus ar-Rijal, vol. ۱۰, p. ۸۹

anyone. Only a small number of faithful and pure Muslims were saved from the current; those who joined 'Ali and stood by his side to the last drop of their blood while (many of them were martyred in the three wars.(۱

The Disrupted Society

This disrupted situation could be put in order neither by Imam 'Ali nor by any other person. Quite on the contrary to what many old and new writers have said, if the first two caliphs had been in the same situation as 'Ali had, things would not have changed greatly.(۲) The success of those two in maintaining the unity and social order was indebted to the conditions of those days rather than to their personal characteristics or general policy. Undoubtedly, if 'Ali had been chosen as caliph in their time, he would have been much more successful than they were. This is to a certain extent true even

about ‘Uthman. His failure did not result just from his negative characteristics. Most probably, if any of his two predecessors had been caliph in his time, the situation would not have been so different and they would have faced more or less the same .problems

These writers have forgotten that problems of ‘Uthman were in the first place the continuation of the problems that ‘Umar faced in the last years of his caliphate and were actually the side effects of the new situation that had been created mainly by the new conquests. In his last years, ‘Umar felt that he had lost his

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See the analysis by Taha Husayn on the economic and, consequently, religious - ۱ .developments of that time. Al-Fitnah al-Kubra, pp. ۱۷۰-۸۱

As an example, see the sermon of Abu Hamzah in Al-Bayan wa’t-Tabyin, vol. ۲, pp. -۲ .(۱۰۰-۳, and the way he introduces the first caliph and ‘Ali (‘a

influence and could not rule with the same power and decisiveness of the first years. It was very difficult for him to accept this fact and, as we have already mentioned, on .several different occasions he expressed his wish to die

However, it is as if ‘Ali’s critics have forgotten all this. This was because, in their analysis, they fail to consider the rapid essential developments of the conditions and they have evaluated the degree of success of each of the caliphs merely based on (their policies and personal characteristics.(۱

Even if Mu‘awiyah, who was known for his tolerance, tactfulness and policies, had taken charge immediately after ‘Uthman’s murder, he would have faced the problems that Imam ‘Ali faced.(۲) Doubtless, the Jamal Companions would oppose Mu‘awiyah much more strongly than they opposed ‘Ali because they admitted the religious and personal worthiness of ‘Ali and even the legality due to public allegiance to him and only brought excuses. They knew this and, therefore, ‘A’ishah on several occasions decided to return while each time she was stopped from doing so by the lies she was told (۳) and she later very much regretted what she had done.(۴) Zubayr also

left the front in the last moments, because he could not convince himself to fight Imam 'Ali.(5)

However, in their view, not only Mu'awiyah lacked any worthy past, but they also considered themselves much more superior and worthier than Mu'awiyah. Apart from this, most probably, people like Sa'd ibn Waqqas and others, who neither supported

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1- A brief account of such criticisms can be found in Nazariyyah al-Imamah lada ash-Shi'ah al-Ithna-'ashariyyah, p. 280.

2- The socioeconomic and, consequently, religious, intellectual and political developments of the first period were so deep and rapid that they disabled a man of politics such as Mu'awiyah. In his terminal illness, he admitted this inability in a sermon, "O' people, we are in hard conditions full of war, a time in which the righteous man is considered guilty and the oppressor adds to his rebelliousness..." 'Uyun al-Akhbar, vol. 2, p. 259.

3- The fact is that 'A'ishah was not that determined or even willing to fights with 'Ali and several times decided to leave it, when 'Abdullah ibn Zubayr, who was her nephew, stopped her from doing so. See Naqsh-e 'A'ishah dar Tarikh-e Islam ('A'ishah's Role in the History of Islam), vol. 2, pp. 51-2.

4- After the Jamal war, 'A'ishah strongly regretted what she had done and showed this regret in different forms, including after the martyrdom of Hajar ibn 'Uday at the hands of Mu'awiyah, she said, "I wanted to rise to avenge 'Udday's blood but I feared I might repeat the Jamal event.", Al-Fikr as-Siyasi ash-Shi'i, p. 291.

5- A precise and elaborate account of Zubayr's deserting the battlefield can be found in Naqsh-e 'A'ishah dar Tarikh-e Islam ('A'ishah's Role in the History of Islam), vol. 2, pp. 160-70.

nor opposed Imam 'Ali, would have opposed Mu'awiyah. To them, it was incomprehensible and unacceptable that Mu'awiyah should be caliph immediately after 'Uthman and they should follow him. Long after taking power, Mu'awiyah still feared them and considered them as impediments to his succession by Yazid.(1)

This is also true in another way about those who accepted the Imam's caliphate. People like Qays ibn Sa'd ibn 'Abadah, even if the Imam was not on the scene, would surely oppose Mu'awiyah or his likes. Their opposition to Mu'awiyah was not because they were among the supporters of 'Ali and then 'Ali opposed Mu'awiyah. Their opposition was a serious and deeply rooted one. They fought beside 'Ali because they thought he was right. Even if there was not such a person to stand beside and fight, the situation would not be much different as Mu'awiyah feared them even after 'Ali was martyred.(۲)

It was thus that the Rebels [khawarij] appeared unavoidably. The problem of the Rebels was not born out of the Arbitration [hakamiyyat]. The event made public a problem that existed even in the Prophet's time. They were violent, strict Bedouins who basically comprehended the religion otherwise, with a very strict interpretation, and it was based on the same understanding that they objected even to the Prophet (S). It is well known that one day a member of the Bani Tamim tribe, who later became one of the heads of the Rebels and was killed in the Jamal war—Dhu'l-Khuwaysarah—when the Prophet distributed the

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۱- For example, see Al-Imamah wa's-Siyasah, pp. ۱۷۷, ۱۸۹, ۱۹۱.

۲- The fact is that the Helpers' support of 'Ali and their opposition to Mu'awiyah and the Umayyad had various reasons. It was the opposition that led them to the support. This continued. Mu'awiyah frequently made sarcastic remarks about them and the other Umayyad rulers did the same and even massacred them. Mahmud Subhi thus quotes Mas'udi as saying, "When Imam Hasan entered into peace with Mu'awiyah, Qays ibn Sa'd insisted on fighting Mu'awiyah while giving his advocates the options either to accept a peace like Imam Hasan or continue the war without the Imam." Then, he adds, "Well, he had well understood what it meant if the Umayyad ruled over the Helpers." Nazariyyah al-Imamah lada ash-Shi'ah al-Ithna-'ashariyyah, p. ۴۴. In another case, Qays ibn Sa'd wrote a letter to Nu'man ibn Bashir, who was also a Helper but he and his father had left the Helpers because of family and tribal rivalry

and joined Mu'awiyah, in which he wrote, "If all Arabs gather around Mu'awiyah, the Helpers will rise to fight them." Concerning the deeply rooted opposition of the Umayyad and the Helpers, see Al-Imamah wa's-Siyasah, vol. ١, pp. ١٧٧-٢٢٠. On the rivalry and hostility between Mu'awiyah and the Helpers, also see Al-Bayan wa't-Tabyin, vol. ١, p. ١٢٩.

booties, objected to him, saying, "O' Muhammad, why didn't you distribute them fairly?" The Prophet got angry and said, "Are you saying I did not act fairly? With whom can you find justice other than with me?" Then, the Prophet said that they would be a group who would rebel against the religion and would have to be fought.(١)

Some time was needed to pass and some developments had to take place before this Bedouin group with its strict interpretations and misunderstandings would be formed to stand up against the ruling system. It would be a sheer mistake to say that they were formed out of the Siffin war and the story of the Arbitration [hakamiyyat]. They were a tumor within the Islamic society that finally secreted its infection and indeed the conditions at the time of Imam 'Ali were so that they found the right time to show themselves.(٢)

Definitely, if Mu'awiyah was in 'Ali's place, he would act more powerfully and extensively. Their objection to 'Ali was, "Why did you accept the Arbitration? You have to regret this act of yours!" This was the only objection they could have because, in their opinion, 'Ali had never deviated from the right path of Islam and, therefore, many of them changed their mind after the Imam and his companions provided some explanation and left the war front in Nahravan. But, could they treat Mu'awiyah so?

A person like Mu'awiyah was, in their eye, the manifestation of oppression, violation, infidelity and irreligiousness. Thus, they

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١- This story is recited in all history and sayings books. See the footnote on Al-Milal wa'n-Nihal, ١, p. ١١۶. Interestingly, this is quoted by a person such as Ibn Taymiyyah. As-Siyasah ash-Shar'iyyah, p. ۴۶. On sayings about the Rebels, see Kanz al-'Ummal,

.vol. ۱۱, pp. ۲۸۶-۳۲۳

On why and how the Rebels appeared and continued their activities, see the very -۲ good book Al-Khawarij fi'l-'Asr al-Umawi by the well-known Nayif, and the older book Al-Khawarij wa'sh-Shi'ah, by Wellhausen, translated by 'Abdu'r-Rahman Badawi. The best and the most comprehensive description of them is provided by the Imam himself. After the Nahravan war, the Imam was asked, "Who were they? Were they infidels?" "They ran away from infidelity." he replied. "Were they hypocrites?" they asked. "The hypocrites rarely remember God while they often did." he said. They asked, "Who were they then?" "They were a group trapped by an evil, which made them blind and dumb." he replied. Al-Musannif, no. ۱۸۶۵۶. Also see Qira'at Jadidah fi .Mawaqif al-Khawarij wa Fikr wa Adabuhum, pp. ۷۵-۸۲

resisted him and his successors when they came to power. It should be said that they created epics in doing so. Their resistance and fighting against them lasted to the beginning of the 'Abbasid period and they finally faded away not with military power but because the grounds for their presence and continuation faded away and those who remained reformed and modified their thought, beliefs and practice so that they (became like the other Muslims.(۱

The Origin of the Problems

The conclusion is that 'Ali's ('a) problems were not just rooted in his justice-seeking attitude. A major part of the problems were due to the conditions of those days and any other individual in his place would face the same problems. If later Mu'awiyah settled in power, it was more because of the conditions that were in place after 'Ali's caliphate rather than because of Mu'awiyah's personal characteristics. Most of his rivals and claimers had been killed in the fight with 'Ali and the bitter experiences of those days had exhausted and fatigued the people and they were no longer willing to respond positively to the call by influential individuals who had claims on power. It was as if the society had been tamed and lost its turbulence while seeking a power that would bring about security. At this time the people thought that it was only Mu'awiyah who could do so with the help of his obedient Syrian supporters. Although he later brought about a security like that in a cemetery among the dead, which

For example, see the sermon of Abu Hamzah where he introduces Mu'awiyah, - ۱ Yazid and Bani Marwan. Al-Bayan wa't-Tabyin, vol. ۲, pp. ۱۰۰-۳. On the reforms and adjustments made by the Rebels in the later periods, see Abbadiyyah's jurisprudence and theology, especially the book Alah al-I'tirad 'an Muhiqqi Al Abad and Al-Usul at-.Tarikhiyyah li'l-Firqat al-Abadiyyah

meant divesting the people of all their freedoms and dignities and violating all the principles of Islam.(۱) This was a brief account of the story of how 'Ali became the caliph and of the oppositions against him. 'Uthman's inefficiency and nepotism and the violations and recklessness of his governors made the people support 'Ali. The people went to 'Ali to pledge allegiance in such great numbers that his two sons were injured. They went to 'Ali themselves so it would not make sense to talk about his .being accepted by the people. They had made their choice before pledging allegiance

There were other factors as well. For example, what Montgomery Watt says about the cause of Mu'awiyah's victory and the problems that Imam 'Ali ('a) faced, "Mu'awiyah was supported by the Syrian Arabs who were ruled by him for many years. Most of them had not come from the desert and were from families who had lived in Syria for one or two generations and, therefore, were more reliable than the Bedouins whom 'Ali ('a) relied on. The superior situation of these Syrian Arabs was (one of the main reasons for Mu'awiyah's success."(۲

The opponents and objectors to 'Ali were in fact troublemakers and adventurous people who would oppose any other person that was to be in 'Ali's place. Their objection was why they were not on top of power. What put them in the same front was their shared opposition to 'Ali rather than sharing the same beliefs or methods. It

The fact is that the Umayyad politics was in various cases accompanied by force, - ۱ pressure, intimidation, discrimination and religious fatalism. For example, see the

words of Mu'awiyah while getting allegiance for Yazid in Al-Imamah wa's-Siyasah, vol. ۱, pp. ۱۸۳-۹۱, and the fearsome sermon of Ziyad ibn Sumayyah to the people of Basrah in Al-Bayan wa't-Tabyin, vol. ۲, pp. ۵۸-۶۰, and the sermon of 'Abd al-Malik after the death of his father, Marwan in Ansab al-Ashraf, vol. ۱, p. ۱۶۴; also his sermon after Mas'ab ibn Zubayr was killed, as provided in Al-Umawiyyun wa'l-Khilafah, p. ۱۲۰; also the letter of Yazid ibn 'Abd al-Malik for the crown princedom of his two children as provided in Tabari, vol. ۷, p. ۲۱۹; also the numerous sermons of Hajjaj, which are provided by Jahiz in the second volume of Al-Bayan wa't-Tabyin, especially his sermon addressed to the people of Iraq as provided in the book, pp. ۱۱۴-۵, especially see Al-Umawiyyun wa'l-Khilafah by Husayn 'Atwan. The best and the most instructive of all is the story that 'Abdullah ibn Marwan, the son of the last Umayyad caliph, quotes to Mansur about the fall of his dynasty from the king of Nawbah. After hearing the story of the Umayyad, the king says to 'Abdullah, "...therefore God took your position because of your sins and put you in a position of abjection while God's avenge on you has not ended yet and I fear God's punishment may come down on you while you are in my country and then the punishment may affect me as well..." .Ibn Khaldun's Introduction, vol. ۱, pp. ۳۹۷-۸

W. M. Watt, The Majesty that was Islam, p. ۱۸. Ja'fari confirms Watt's views about -۲ .the difference between the Syrians and the Iraqis

was them whose propagandas, threats, or subornation created a gap in the united line of the masses of people who had directly pledged allegiance to 'Ali or had recognized him. Otherwise, the fact is that, except for a small number, everyone had accepted 'Ali as caliph. It can even be said that this popular acceptance was more extensive than that of the past caliphs.(۱)

We remind that the story of 'Ali's becoming the caliph was different from those of the three previous caliphs. Although the people who surrounded and swore allegiance to him generally looked at him as they had at the previous caliphs and wanted him to take charge of their worldly affairs, there were still some among his supporters who swore allegiance to him because they thought he was the right person to succeed the Prophet (S). Their allegiance was not just for having a leader for their worldly affairs.

Rather, it was an allegiance to the right successor of the Prophet (S) both in their worldly and in their religious affairs, i.e. an allegiance to one who was worthy of the position of Imamate in its deep and extensive sense, an Imamate that was the continuation of Prophethood, a divine mission and a natural and logical consequence thereof. Although they were small in number, they kept remained by 'Ali's side and would call the people to him while also having a critical role in 'Ali's wars and were by and large martyred during the wars.(۲)

A Distorted Picture of Reality

This was the reality

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۱- "The people pledge allegiance to me; the same people who did so to Abu Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthman..." Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah, vol. ۳, p. ۸.

۲- Allamah Amini gives various accounts of those of the Helpers who accompanied Imam 'Ali ('a) in the Siffin war. According to the dominant version in Mustadrak, ۲۵۰ of those who swore allegiance to the Prophet (S) in the Ridwan allegiance were by 'Ali's side while, according to another account, they were ۸۰۰ and ۳۶۰ of them were killed. Also the Badris accompanying 'Ali have been said to be ۷۰, ۸۰ or even ۱۰۰. They mention the names of ۱۴۵ Helpers. They are, in general, the Helpers faithful to Imam 'Ali and respected him in a position proportionately to what the Prophet (S) had advised. Many of them were martyred in this war and, in the later years of his life, 'Ali, who missed them, shed tears for them many times and wished to join them as soon as possible. Al-Ghadir, vol. ۹, pp. ۳۶۲-۸. Also, see Tasmiyah min Shahd ma'a 'Ali Hurubihihi in the article At-Tasmiyat in the journal Turathuna, vol. ۱۵, p. ۳۱.

of the history of the Senior Caliphs as it occurred. If the first part is peaceful and without tension, it is because of the foreign threats and being busy dealing with the internal threats, poverty, the simple and narrow society. If the next part is disturbed and full of tension, it is because of the new conditions that were created as the foreign threats had been removed and the wealth that had flowed in. Appointing the caliphs

was a regular thing to the people of that time. In their view, the caliphs were ordinary people and their position did not have any significance. The caliphs themselves had .the same view

When Abu Bakr said, "Understand me; I am not the best of you." Or "There is a Satan who overcomes me. If I go the wrong way, lead me back to the right way", he neither joked nor was it a litotes. He really thought like that and the others viewed him that way. When 'Umar said, "Watch me. If I make a mistake, notify me.", he was serious. When an Arab stood up to say, "I swear by God that, if you go the wrong way, we'll use our swords to bring you back to the right way.", in fact he was expressing the perception of the people of his time about the caliph and basically the position of (caliphate.(١

Later, however, as we will explain, things were looked at and depicted differently. The stories gradually become less and less worldly

p: ٩٧

The first two caliphs said many such words, which are provided in various historical -١ and narrative resources. See Tajrid al-I'tiqad and the footnotes of Muhammad Jawad .Jalali on the same book, pp. ٢۴١-۵۴

and more and more religious and spiritual and even sacred. The period of history that was the history of the early Muslims was depicted as the history of the realization of Islam in its entire and pure form as part of the sequence of the other Islamic periods or even in line with the religion itself. They even become criteria for interpreting the religion and given a stature equal to that of the Prophet's (S) time. Now the problem is .how this occurred, why and what the consequences were

After Mu'awiyah had absolute power and Imam Hasan was forced to keep silent, he did things that later became the source of many important changes in the history of Islam and even in the understanding of the Muslims themselves. This does not mean that he knew the results of his actions. Perhaps he pursued other goals but his actions were very much effective in the structure of Islamic theology, jurisprudence and

ideology, so much so that it would not be an exaggeration to say that, without considering what he did, one cannot find out about the changes in the understanding of the Muslims about Islam and Islam in its entirety.(١)

Mu‘awiyah had important opponents even in the peak of his power and perhaps he knew them well. They were ‘Abdullah ibn Zubayr, ‘Abdu’r-Rahman ibn Abu Bakr, ‘A’ishah, Sa‘d ibn Waqqas, ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Umar, Qays ibn Sa‘d ibn ‘Abadah and, in general, the companions of and the Shi‘ites supporting Imam ‘Ali (‘a). Except for

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١ - What Mu‘awiyah did was so effective and lasting that even the Umayyad themselves were put in a high position with the Sunnis “Because the issue of the Umayyad and defending them always remained as part of Sunni political thought.” Dahi al-Islam, vol. ٣, p. ٣٢٩.

the opposition of Shi‘ites and of the Rebels, which was on ideological grounds, the rest were politically motivated. However, Mu‘awiyah was clever enough and knew enough about the people and the right time to tackle his political opponents and to suborn and threaten them to silence. Therefore, he could bear them. What was unbearable to him and he even feared was the heavy shadow and the attraction of ‘Ali (‘a).

Indeed ‘Ali (‘a) had already been martyred by that time. He feared his personality rather than his person. Such a personality opposed the legality and the absolute domination of his. If he could break the personality and sacredness, he both would have taken the historical revenge of himself and his family on him and removed the biggest impediment to the legality and continuation of his domination and that of his family.(١)

Confronting ‘Ali’s Personality

The first step was encouraging cursing Imam ‘Ali (‘a). After a while, he realized that this alone was not sufficient and effective. He, therefore, decided to order his rulers to forge stories similar to stories of the virtues of ‘Ali, as approved by the Prophet (S), but

this time about other people. This is the starting point of the developments and the time when he and his men are taken as sacred. At this time, sayings were forged in appreciation of the Companions, the time of the Companions, the Three Caliphs, the Senior Caliphs, the Promised Ten ['ashrah Mubashshirah], the Prophet's wives and important influential people in the early periods of

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۱ - See Adwa' 'ala as-Sunnah al-Muhammadiyyah, p. ۲۱۶, and how Abu Hurayrah forged sayings against Imam 'Ali in order to please Mu'awiyah and, in Kufah, after Mu'awiyah's power was established, read the same to the people and received great rewards.

Islam. These sayings settled in the minds of the people and even the scholars and narrators of sayings, and never left their minds or were doubted because there was no ground for this to happen while they were reinforced in the later periods for reasons that we will say later.

Ibn Abi'l-Hadid has a chapter in Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah under the title 'Expressing Part of the Pains and Tortures inflicted upon the Ahl al-Bayt', in which he quotes a full saying from Imam Baqir ('a) in which the latter provides an account of what the Shi'ites' Imams and their followers went through, "... We were constantly subject to battery and cursing, chasing and disadvantages. We and our followers could not live safely. Then liars who fought the truth stepped in who reached positions with amirs, judges and governors because of the lies they told. They forged quotations and propagated them. What we had not said or done, they narrated about us so as to disgrace us with the people and to make them hostile to us. This situation was worsened after Imam Hasan died in the time of Mu'awiyah..."(۱) After this quotation, he quotes another story from the reliable book Al-Ihdath by Mada'ini, a major part of which we mention here because it serves many useful purposes, "After 'Ali ('a) was martyred, when Mu'awiyah settled in power, he thus wrote to his governors, 'I shall not have any obligation to him who talks about the virtues of 'Ali or his family.'

۱- To understand the numerous points mentioned in the tradition, which shows the conditions of Shi'ites in a period of one century, see Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah, vol. ۱۱, p. ۴۳.

Subsequently, orators began to curse at 'Ali ('a) at any rostrum they stood on to give speeches. They expressed their renouncement and used bad language about him and his family. Kufah was troubled more than other places because there were more Shi'ites there. Mu'awiyah appointed Ziyad ibn Sumayyah as the governor and added Basrah to that. He hunted for Shi'ites and, as he was a Shi'ite during 'Ali's time, he knew them very well. He would find and kill them anywhere they were. Terror reigned wherever. He would cut off limbs, make them blind and would hang them from palm trees. He chased them out of Iraq. As a result, no well-known person remained there."

On another occasion, Mu'awiyah wrote to his agents, "Do not accept the testimony of the Shi'ites of 'Ali or any of their dependents. Focus your attention on Shi'ites and the friends of 'Uthman. Bring close to yourselves and respect those who talk about his virtues. Send me their story, their name and the names of their father and their clan."

His agents did so until there were many virtues of 'Uthman talked about and distributed around. This was due to the various awards that Mu'awiyah gave to Arabs and liberated slaves, be it a cloak or a piece of land, etc. They competed for material success. Any hobo that went to an agent of Mu'awiyah and recounted a story on the virtues of 'Uthman would be enrolled to be appreciated and given a special reward. Some time

passed by with such events. As these events unfolded, time passed by.

After a while, he wrote to his governors, "There are many sayings about 'Uthman anywhere. When you get my letter, encourage the people to talk about the virtues of the Companions and the First Caliphs. Any virtue that has been talked about 'Ali, forge

the same about the Companions and send it to me, because I like this better and it would make me happier while they neutralize the arguments of 'Ali and his Shi'ites ".and it will cost them dearer than mentioning the virtues of 'Uthman

His letters were read out to the people. Following this, many stories about the virtues of the Companions were told, all of which were lies and forged. The people went on this path until the stories were read out on rostrums and were induced to school masters. They taught the same to children and the sayings became so common and so significant that they were learned like the Qur'an and were taught to girls, women, .male and female slaves

Then he wrote another letter asking his agents to put under pressure and persecute anyone who loved 'Ali and to destroy his house. "...thus many sayings were forged and propagated. The jurisprudents, judges and amirs followed on the same path. In the meanwhile, the narrators who lied and pretended to be pious and sacred were far ahead of the others and much more involved in reaching wealth and a position by doing so and by

getting close to governors, until the forged sayings reached pious and truthful people, people who neither told lies nor could, by nature, believe that the others could tell lies as narrators. Therefore, they accepted them all as truth. If they had known the (sayings were lies, they would have neither accepted them nor narrated them..."(١

Ibn Abi'l-Hadid then quotes ibn Naftawiyyah, who is a great scholar of the sayings, "Most of the forged sayings that were made about the Companions during the Umayyad reign were made because the latter intended to bring themselves closer to (the Companions, thus destroying the Bani Hashim."(٢

The fact is that Mu'awiyah and, his successors, the Umayyad did so for a variety of reasons. To stabilize and legalize their position and to defeat their great rival, Bani Hashim and on about that the Imams, they had to depict themselves as the religious and legal inheritors of 'Uthman and show that 'Ali was involved in his murder. If they

could do so, they would achieve their goals. It is exactly because of this that their poets and eulogists talked about the virtues of 'Uthman, his innocence while being murdered and that the Umayyad were the true inheritors of his blood and his inheritors in the caliphate.(۳)

In this regard, Goltziher says, "It is historically quite evident that the Umayyads introduced themselves as the religious and legal successors of 'Uthman and, seeking to avenge 'Uthman's death, were hostile to 'Ali and the Shi'ites. 'Uthman was the symbol and slogan of

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۱- Ibid., pp. ۴۴-۶.

۲- Ibid., p. ۴۶.

۳- For example, see the poems of Umayyad poets in Al-Umawiyyun wa'l-Khilafah, pp. ۱۵-۲۱, and compare the same with the rejections of the 'Abbasid poets in Murawwij adh-Dhahab, vol. ۳, p. ۴۳.

the Umayyads against 'Ali and the 'Alavites. Thus, the title 'Uthmani (ottoman) was one used for the ardent supporters of the Umayyad."(۱)

All this depended on giving 'Uthman as high a position as possible. Such a position would immunize him against any criticism that might be said against him. This would entail several results. Firstly, nobody would consider why and by whom and on what charges was he killed. The virtues that were recounted about him surrounded his true personality and behavior with a thick curtain and would make him disappear in a halo of light. Secondly, it would prove that an individual like this was on the right path to the last moment of his life, he was killed innocently like a martyr and his murderers were misled about religion and were on the wrong path. They could indeed use propaganda to make the people believe that 'Ali was involved in the event, and effectively so. Thirdly, the innocent blood had to be avenged and nobody deserved to do this more than Mu'awiyah and the Umayyad and it is he who deserves to succeed 'Uthman.

Thus, Mu'awiyah's succession and caliphate would be justified and his opposition and

fight against ‘Ali as well. This was an argument that would be accepted by the Muslims of that time, who were still under the influence of the pre-Islamic heritage and rules, which the Umayyads sought to revive as much as possible because, according to the "Thar" law in the pre-Islamic customs, the inheritors

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.Goldziher, Muslim Studies, vol. ۲, p. ۱۱۵ -۱

of the murdered person should avenge his blood. The only principle was attaining (revenge.(۱

The best proof for what was said is the story of the conclusion of the agreement during the arbitration for the Siffin war by ‘Amru ibn al-‘As and Abu Musa Ash‘ari, a model which later both Mu‘awiyah and the other Umayyad caliphs followed. After the many arguments between the two, ‘Amru ibn al-‘As asked his counterpart to have what they agreed on written by the scribe, who was ‘Amru's son. After they both testified to the unity of God and the prophethood of the Prophet and truth of the first two caliphs, ‘Amru addressed his son, asking him to write, "‘Uthman became caliph after ‘Umar and with the consensus of the Muslims and consulting with the Companions and he was a pious person." Abu Musa objected, saying, "We are not ".here to discuss this issue

Amru said, "I swear by God he was either a pious person or an infidel." Abu Musa said,‘ "He was a pious person." Amru said, "Was he an oppressor or was he made subject to oppression?" "He was subject to oppression." Abu Musa said. "Has God not given the choice to the guardian of the oppressed to avenge their blood?" "Yes, he has." Abu Musa said. ‘Amru said, "Do you know a worthier person than Mu‘awiyah to be ‘Uthman's guardian?" "No." Abu Musa said. "Is Mu‘awiyah not right in searching out ‘Uthman's murderer wherever he is in order to kill him or

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The Umayyad said the caliphate was a right belonging to them, which they - ۱

inherited from ‘Uthman. ‘Uthman got it from the Council but he was killed unjustly and his right was ignored. The caliphate left his dynasty and was transferred to the others. It is their duty to go to war in order to return it. The poets supporting the Umayyad said this repeatedly on different occasions (Al-Umawiyyun wa’l-Khilafah, p. ١٣) and even spread the propaganda that the Umayyad inherited the caliphate from the Prophet (S). Ibid., p. ١٧. This propaganda was so effective that it was widely believed in at least their main territory, i.e. Syria, until the fall of the Umayyad dynasty. Mas‘udi says in this regard, “After Marwan, the last of the Umayyad caliphs, was killed, ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Ali came to Syria, where he selected a number of the senior and rich people to send to Saffah. They swore before Saffah that they did not know any family of the Prophet to be his inheritors other than the Umayyad. In this meeting, Ibrahim ibn Muhajir recited a poem that was later followed by the supporters of the ‘Abbasid, in which he sarcastically mentioned the ‘Abbasid rather than the Umayyad as the inheritors of the Prophet. Murawwij adh-Dhahab, vol. ٣, p. ٤٣.

not be faught in attempting to do so?” “Yes.” said Abu Musa. “We think that ‘Ali has killed ‘Uthman.”(١)

All of these were written as part of the agreement.

Increasing Importance of the Companions’ Position and Stature

This was a brief account of the conditions in which sayings were forged in favor of ‘Uthman and his previous caliphs and the Prophet’s Companions. In order to achieve his goals, Mu‘awiyah had to put ‘Uthman in a high position. Therefore, as Mada’ini says, Mu‘awiyah issued orders for forging sayings immediately after he became the caliph. However, the problem was that this could not be limited to ‘Uthman. To the people of that time, some of whom had seen ‘Uthman and the previous caliphs, it was not acceptable that he had had such a position while the previous caliphs and the other well-known Companions had not. It would be questionable and dubious and would raise doubts about ‘Uthman’s virtues. They were thus forced to raise the positions of others along with ‘Uthman, and they did so.

Other than this obligation, there were other consequences to this action, the most

important being that, by illuminating the face of each of the Companions, they would help reduce the importance of the most illuminating one.(٢) When Mu‘awiyah said, "Do not ignore any virtue that has been quoted by any Muslim about ‘Ali, unless you mention for me a counterpart for it among the Companions.", he actually meant to reduce the importance of ‘Ali. Therefore, he explicitly said, "I would like it better. It would make me happy

p: ١٠۶

Read the elaborate account of the story in Murawwij adh-Dhahab, vol. ٢, pp. ۴٠۶-٩. -١ Interestingly, Professor Subhani considers this story as the source of the belief in the truth of the caliphs. "No trace of this belief can be found at the time of the Three Caliphs. None of the Immigrants or the Helpers would ever think that belief in anyone's caliphate would be an obligation and that anyone not believing in their caliphate would not be a true believer and be a heretic. This principle was created by such politics in order to harm ‘Ali and to legalize Mu‘awiyah's rebellion in order to avenge ‘Uthman's blood. Perhaps ‘Amru ibn al-‘As was the first person to cultivate such thought." Then, he gives a full account of the story and concludes that, "This story and its likes indicate that belief in the caliphs' right to caliphate was born in an atmosphere of hostility and rivalry so that a clever and deceitful person could use the belief in the right of the Two Shaykhs to caliphate as a ground for acknowledging .(‘Uthman's) right..." Al-Milal wa'n-Nihal, vol. ١, pp. ٢۶۵-۶

An example of such a current can be found in Rijal hawl ar-Rasul. This current has -٢ affected even a liberated and modernist person such as Khalid Muhammad Khalid, .the author of the book

and would neutralize the arguments of ‘Ali and his Shi‘ites." Indeed he succeeded in .this for reasons that we will mention later

Nevertheless, the result was that he raised the level of the others so much that sometimes they would be close to that of the Prophet (S)(١) and the early history of Islam was given a special importance and became sacred and was as valuable and important as Islam itself. It was so important that Islam would be unimportant

.without considering it

Development in the Understanding of the Religion

Thus, a political rivalry entailed a great development in the understanding of the religion, which meant understanding the religion in the light of the early periods, i.e. those of the Senior Caliphs, the Companions, the Followers and especially the Senior Caliphs and the Companions. Although there were numerous factors involved, the most important and effective were indeed the same as those of Mu'awiyah for destroying the personality of 'Ali. His forgeries for disgracing 'Ali, however, did not and could not survive although they were not ineffective either, especially in the first centuries; however, his forgeries for putting others at the same level as that of 'Ali .remained and were universally believed

As we have mentioned before, one of the basic differences between the Shi'ites and the Sunnis was and is their different perceptions of Islam. The Sunnis, contrarily to the Shi'ites, accepted Mu'awiyah's actions consciously or subconsciously and finally accepted him. Therefore, they looked at Islam through its early history while the Shi'ites looked at the early history of

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۱- In his Sharh as-Sunnah, Barbahari says, "You shall believe that Abu Bakr and 'Umar were buried in 'A'ishah's pavilion. When you come to the Prophet's grave, then it is necessary to express greetings to those two after the Prophet." Tabaqat al-Hanabilah, vol. ۲, p. ۳۵. Cf. the article on the Companions in Shorter Encyclopaedia of .Islam, p. ۴۸۸, and also Al-'Awasim min al-Qawasim, vol. ۳, pp. ۲۳-۲۳۰

(۱)Islam according to the principles and criteria of Islam.

Although later with the development of analysis and historical critique, mainly thanks to the Mu'tazilites, the undisputable religious splendor of the early period was somehow broken, it was a transient flow and could not be continued due to numerous reasons, the most important of which was that the Mu'tazilites came into being when

the religious thought of the mass of the people had been formed. They wanted to reform beliefs that had been intermingled with the heart and soul of the people and based on which, their personalities had been formed. They naturally failed in doing so. Most probably, if they had come into being at an earlier time, they would have had (more success.(٢

As we said, the core of Sunni religious belief in those and the later days is the same sacred attitude towards early Islamic history.(٣) If this collapsed, the basis of their beliefs would collapse. Therefore, neither the Mu'tazilites nor any other group could confront it. The question was not which opinion was right and which wrong. The mentality of the masses of the people and a major part of the jurisprudents and .scholars of the sayings had been formed in a way that required such an outlook

Otherwise, both their faith and their personalities would collapse from within and this meant that no belief would exist to substitute the previous attitude. Accepting the Mu'tazilite beliefs would mean the collapse of the entire structure of their beliefs. Neither were

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This is one of the sensitive, fine and critical points rarely noticed by Shi'ites and - ١ Sunnis. They talk to each other based on their principles and beliefs. One of the best examples is Dala'il as-Sidq by the late Shaykh Muhammad Husayn Muzaffar, which is a rejection on Ibtal al-Batil by Fadl ibn Ruzbihan, the latter also being a rejection of Nahj al-Haqq by 'Allamah Hilli. By reflecting on the text and the rejection of ibn Ruzbihan and then the critique of the late Muzaffar on him, one finds out that some of the discussions are based on two absolutely different foundations, while each of them has looked at the issue through their own beliefs and has criticized the other party on .the same basis

.For example, see the elaborate introduction of Abu Ridah on Rasa'il al-Kindi -٢

Abd al-Hadi Ha'iri thus quotes Watt, the well-known British orientalist, on why Sadr' -٣ the First was sanctified, "It was in the late decades of the ٩/٣ century that the Muslims clearly found out that the only way to protect their Islamic identity was for them to

depend on the past history of Islam or, at least, that of the first periods. In the late years of the same century, most of those who were involved in various religious movements accepted Sunnism with all its differences. This meant that all the companions of the Prophet of Islam, including 'Uthman, whose qualification for caliphate was strongly doubted by groups of the earlier Muslims, had to be respected..." Majalleh-ye Daneshkadeh-ye Adabiyyat wa 'Ulum-e Insani (Journal of Faculty of Literature and Humanities), Mashhad, serial no. ۵۶, p. ۷۳۳.

the Mu'tazilites so reliable nor what they said was explicit and comprehensible to be blindly accepted by them, especially since the Mu'tazilites did not have a stable and well-developed school and every one of them expressed a view different from those of the others.(۱)

Finally, another important point to be added to this is that every faithful person, be he a Muslim or non-Muslim, has a conservative belief system. This is a requisite for religious faith and its outcome. He has accepted the religion and borne its limitations to reach otherworldly salvation. Because of this, he will choose faith if given two choices of faith or reason. The problem again is not that these two are opposite to each other or vice versa. The problem is discovering the characteristics of the mind and the thought of a faithful person or his attitude. When facing two beliefs one of which he deems to be according to the rules of the religion and the other one of which he deems to be according to reason, he will finally chose the former. In such cases, the religious precaution will never be overcome by rational precision.(۲)

The Mu'tazilites faced such a problem. This is a problem that many reformists today are facing as well and is the most important factor of why progressive reformist movements tend to be conservative although their views are rationally and logically superior to those of their rivals and are seemingly according to the religious rules as well. However, being suspicious about

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۱- One of the big problems of the Mu'tazilites was that they developed the final form

of their beliefs exactly at a time when they were on decline due to various political, social, intellectual and religious reasons. The peak of this matury can be found in the books of Qadi 'Abd al-Jabbar, except for Al-Mughanni, which was ignored by Sunni scholars despite its significance, and it was only in the ٥٠'s of the present century that it was discovered in Yemen, the center for Mu'tazilite Zaydis. See Al-Usul al-Khamsah, which is among the best books on Mu'tazilite thought and is more than any of its preceding books based on religious and Qur'anic foundations. If these and similar books had stepped on the scene earlier or at least simultaneously with the books of Abu'l-Hasan Ash'ari, the Ash'arites would not have had such absolute hegemony. Regarding how the Ash'arites entered on the scene and why they succeeded, see his interview with the senior man of the Hanbalites of Baghdad, Barbahari in Tabaqat al-Hanabilah, vol. ٢, pp. ١٨-٩.

٢- See the dialog between Ibn Hanbal and Mu'tasim in Rijal al-Fikr wa'd-Da'wah fi'l-Islam by Abu'l-Hasan Nadwi, pp. ١١٨-٢٠, and especially Manaqib al-Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal by al-Jawzi, pp. ٣٩٧-٤٣٧, the story of whose discussions with Mu'tasim and Wathiq are elaborately provided.

them, which was caused by the irresponsibility of some, and their disagreement with the heritage of those whom the people considered as righteous people, finally drove them out and made their rivals successful. It would be appropriate here to quote Ibn Abi'l-Hadid about some of their views about the Companions:

"The Mu'tazilites looked at the Companions and the Followers as they looked at the other people, i.e. individuals who sometimes made mistakes and sometimes were on the right path, who did things some of which are to be praised and some to be criticized. They did not fear adopting such a position while the others were not so because they had put the Companions and the great ones of the Followers in a position that could not be criticized."

"The Mu'tazilites said, 'We see that some Companions criticize the others and some even cursed at the others. If the Companions were in such a position that was not to be criticized or cursed at, this would have to be inferred from their behavior towards each other because they knew each other better than the people of our time do while

we see that Talhah, Zubayr, 'A'ishah and their supporters refused to support 'Ali and even opposed him. Mu'awiyah and 'Amru ibn al-'As also fought against 'Ali. 'Umaru made a sarcastic remark to Abu Hurayrah because of the latter's quoting a story and upbraided Khalid ibn Walid as a corrupt person while condemning 'Amru ibn al-'As and Mu'awiyah of betrayal and theft from

the public treasury. Basically, few people can be found among the Companions who were not subject to his action or remarks while many such examples can be found.

The Followers treated each other in a similar fashion to that of the Companions and made similar remarks about their offenders. However, the public put them in a high place in later times. The Companions are like the other people. We criticize their wrongdoers and praise their righteous ones. Their superiority to others is only because of experiencing the presence of the Prophet (S). Perhaps their sins are greater than those of the others because they closely witnessed the miracles and the signs of the truth of the religion and, therefore, our sins are lighter than theirs because we can be excused [on such grounds]."(۱)

After quoting the above, Ahmad Amin says that the Mu'tazilites freely criticized the deeds and words of the Companions and the Followers and revealed their contradictions. They even went so far as to criticize the Two Shaykhs. Then he mentions examples of their criticisms of Abu Bakr and 'Umar.(۲)

Adopting such a position towards the Companions and the Followers were mainly or even entirely due to their rationalist tendencies. They did not want to accept anything that was said without reason or give any principle a priority higher than that given to reason. It was exactly because of this that the people said this about them and their opponents, "Backgammon is Ash'arite and chess is the Mu'tazilite.", because the backgammon

.Duha al-Islam, vol. ٣, pp. ٧٥-۶, quoted from Sharh Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol. ۴, p. ۴۵۴ -١
.Duha al-Islam, vol. ٣, pp. ٨۶-٨ -٢

player relies on chance and destiny while a chess player relies on wits and (struggle."(١)

The Other Critics

Other than the Mu'tazilites, there were also others who inclined towards intellectual liberalism and critically analyzed the early history of Islam and the time of the Companions and of the Followers. From among them, we can mention Ibn Khaldun. While talking about Islamic jurisprudence, he says, "... Apart from this, all the Companions were not experts on giving opinions or issuing fatwas and it was not possible to ask all of them regarding religious duties. This was limited to those who knew the Qur'an by heart and to those who were familiar with the nullifying [nasikh] and nullified [mansukh], similar [mutishabih] and explicit [muhkam] contents and the other guidelines of the Qur'an, because they had either learned these directly from .the Prophet (S) or from their superiors

Therefore, they were known as the Reciters [qurra'], i.e. one who recited the Qur'an because the Arabs were an illiterate nation, those who could read the Qur'an became known as the Readers, which seemed to be a strange thing to them at that time. In the early periods of Islam, this was the situation. After a while, Islamic cities developed and progressed and reached a splendid point and illiteracy was eliminated among the Arabs by insisting on the Book—the Qur'an—and inferences were made and the jurisprudence was completed and included among the techniques and the sciences. Then, the word to refer to someone who knew the Qur'an by heart

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.Ibid., p. ٨٩ -١

(changed and was replaced by 'jurisprudent' or scholar..."(١)

Ibn Hazm is among these individuals. Indeed he reaches a viewpoint similar to that of

the Mu'tazilites and Ibn Khaldun from a different stance. He is a scholar and jurisprudent of the Zahiri school, who limited the religious documents to the divine decrees and the consensus and rejected deduction. He reached such a point of view by rejecting the theory of 'the right words' and the 'right deeds', which were unanimously agreed on by Sunnis. In this regard, Muhammad Abu Zuhrah says, "Ibn Hazm believed that it was not permissible to imitate any person, be he one of the companions or otherwise, alive, or dead. He believed that deeming as true sayings which are attributed to the Companions, but are not approved by the Prophet's tradition is an imitation that is not allowed in God's religion because no saying shall be deemed as true, unless it is approved by the Book and the Tradition or a consensus of .these two or a proof that is derived from the collection of these three

Then, the Companions' sayings cannot be considered as evidence because they were ordinary people. The like of this theory has been quoted from Shafi'i. In this respect, he said, "How can I adopt the saying of him whom I would argue with if I had been living during his time." However, it would be close to reality to say that Shafi'i would accept the Companions sayings if all the Companions had

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١- Ibn Khaldun's Introduction, vol. ٢, pp. ٩٠٧-٨.

a consensus on them while he would adopt one of their sayings, if they have varying opinions. No, that a saying is that of a Companion does not constitute sufficient ground for following it because no one's saying is as valuable as that of God's Prophet. As Malik ibn Anas said, "Everyone has said things some of which are rejected except by he who has made this speech."(١)

The Intellectual and Ideological Consequences

Nevertheless, the problem is not just that Islam has to be looked at and studied out of the early Islamic history. More important than this was that this period was contradictory in itself in many ways. This is a period full of rivalry, conflicts and disputes, so far so that the great people of the time stood up against each other and

had each other's blood on their hands. If it was the best and the most sacred period and nothing but the realization of true Islam and its Muslims were the best and the noblest Muslims, why did they stand up and draw their swords against each other? How could two truths fight each other? Such considerations in practice influenced the formation of the jurisprudential and theological structure and the religious psychology of Sunnism more than, for example, accepting the principle that Islam has to be understood and interpreted according to the early Islamic history.(۲)

To solve this problem, they had to resort to certain solutions. They were forced to say both were right and, despite their disputes and fights, both acted according

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۱ - Ibn Hazm, Hayatuhu wa 'Asruhu, 'Ara'uhu wa Fiqhuhu, pp. ۴۸۳-۵, and also Goldziher, The Zahiris, Their Doctrine and their History, pp. ۱۹۰-۲۰۷.

۲ - As we have already said, apart from Shi'ites, it was the Mu'tazilites who had a critical attitude towards the early history. Fajr al-Islam, pp. ۲۶۶-۷۸. There were the Traditionists and the Hanbalites, who thought about nothing but sanctifying that period of history and its statesmen. "As the history of the Umayyad was written during the 'Abbasid era, who were their enemies, their virtues were not mentioned. However, Ahmad Ibn Hanbal mentioned some virtues of the Umayyad, which has made the orientalists praise his leadership and bravery." Duha al-Islam, vol. ۲, p. ۱۲۲. This method of Ibn Hanbal, which was contrary to that of his time, originated merely in his dogmatic belief in the truth of that period of history and its statesmen. In this respect, see Al-A'immah al-Arba'ah, vol. ۴, p. ۱۱۷. Other than this group, Sunni scholars in general had an intermediate stance. Al-Iqtisad fi'l-I'tiqad, pp. ۲۰۳-۵. Cf. Gibb's views.

to their duties and will, therefore, attain reward and enter into the Paradise. It is possible to justify one, two or several cases based on such a hypothesis and to say that there were mistakes in the actual manifestations. Yet, the problem is that the early Islamic history is full of such events and clashes and is nothing but the story of such rivalries and confrontations, especially among those about whom one cannot mention such doubts. This is a problem that not only strongly influenced the Sunni

image of history as relating to those days, but also affected everything that somehow related to Islam.(1)

From this point of view, the history of those days and, consequently, that of the entire history of Islam is neither absolutely black nor absolutely white. Rather, it is gray. It is as if there was no certain criterion to judge the true or the false. Everybody is either absolutely right or somehow floating in a sort of truth without anyone being preferred to the others. More important than this is that judging their actions and behavior and criticizing the events were banned. The principle was that all were good and the difference in their behaviors was because of their differing knowledge rather than their faith or the other characteristics originating from their faith and, because of this, we are not allowed to question what they did and consider their actions for judging their truth. Thus, the mental, intellectual and psychological backgrounds to judge them according to

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۱- In regards to how Ijtihad and exegesis [ta'awwul] were used as means to acquit those who had done something wrong, see the introduction by Sayyid Muhammad Taqi Hakim on An-Nass wa'l-Ijtihad and the book itself and on what ijtihad means and where it can be applied, see Al-Ghadir, vol. ۹, pp. ۳۴۱-۹. It would be appropriate here to mention an example. When Khalid Ibn Walid killed Malik Ibn Nuwayrah in order to seize his wife and then returned to Medina, 'Umar asked Abu Bakr to avenge him, Abu Bakr said, "I will not kill him because he made ijtihad and made an error." Al-Islam wa Usul al-Hukm, p. ۱۷۹. This concept was later used widely both to acquit criminals and to acquit their historical heritage and to organize the historical, jurisprudential and theological perceptions of the Sunnis. For example, see the chapter on the virtues of Khalid Ibn Walid in Kanz al-'Ummal, vol. ۱۳, pp. ۳۶۶-۸۰. Doubtless, one of the necessary things for such organizing is to extend the scope of ijtihad in the first place and, in the second place, to interpret and justify the disputes that had arisen between two trustworthy persons. For example, on the causes of the dispute between 'Umar and Khalid Ibn Walid, Sha'bi, who is one of the great jurisprudents of the late first century

and has an effective role in the organizing of Sunni jurisprudential and theological thought, says, "Khalid was 'Umar's cousin. The two had quarreled with each other in childhood. Khalid broke 'Umar's calf, which was healed sometime later. This was a reason for hostility between the two." Kanz al-'Ummal, vol. ۱۳, p. ۳۶۹. Also see 'Umar Ibn al-Khattab by 'Abdu'l-Karim al-Khatib, pp. ۴۲۴-۴۰. On the interpretation and justification of Jamal and Siffin wars during which the most prominent of the people went to war with each other, without offending or questioning any of the figures, see Manaqib al-Khulafa al-Arba'ah fi Mu'allifat ash-Shi'ah by 'Abdu's-Sattar at-Tunisi, pp. ۶۴-۷۰, and also Al-Bid'ah: Tahdiduha wa Mawqif al-Islam minha, pp. ۲۵-۶۱ by 'Izzat 'Ali 'Atiyyah, especially Al-'Awasim min al-Qawasim and especially in this respect see the footnotes of Muhibb ad-Din Khatib, a book which is a masterpiece in religious and historical justification and interprets and justifies even the most apparent historical and religious facts in a way different from their reality. For example, see the justification on Mu'awiyah's command to kill Hajr ibn 'Uday, pp. ۲۱۱-۳ and the footnote of Khatib on page ۲۱۲; and also see Khatib's defending Yazid, p. ۲۱۴; also see pp. ۲۴۴-۵۱, on which Ibn 'Arabi condemns all historians except Tabari and for example why stories of corruptions of the caliphs have been told; also see I. Goldziher, The Zahiris, .pp. ۳-۱۳; and the views of Ibn Hazm on sententia, deduction and causal determination

the contradictions and to evaluate the issues based on their truth or falsehood were eliminated. This strongly influenced the jurisprudential and theological fundamentals of political discussions whether about imamate or caliphate or political and religious (issues.(۱

The Sunni jurisprudential and theological structures and, consequently, the Sunni psycho-religious structure rely on the thought that, in competition between two Muslims, it is not possible for one to be absolutely right and the other to be absolutely wrong. This is in the first place due to their sacred view of the early history [of Islam] and its figures. This thought and this psychological structure has made problems within Sunnism in the present time. One can say that it is a new unprecedented problem because the Sunnis in the past never faced such a problem or at least it was not as severe as it is now. It is the modern life, society and history that have brought

(about such a problem with such severity.(۲

In the past, the need and urgency to respond to the revolutionary needs of the young generation were not so strong or serious or there was not such a problem at all or, if there was, it was not as extensive and forceful as it is now. Today, such a problem exists throughout the Third World and the Muslim countries and Islam cannot be indifferent to it, especially because the young Muslims in general, at least in the past two decades, have demanded Islam to respond. They require Islamic responses to

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For example, see the views of Ibn Hanbal on early Muslims. Al-A'immah al-Arba'ah, -۱ vol. ۴, p. ۱۱۷, and compare them with his political thoughts and beliefs. Ibid., pp. ۱۱۹-۲۰, and especially see Sharh as-Sunnah by Barbahari, the great Hanbalite scholar of the ۴th century in Tabaqat al-Hanabilah, pp. ۱۸-۴۵. Also see Al-Ibanah 'an Usul ad-Diyanah .by Abu'l-Hasan Ash'ari, pp. ۴۵-۱۴۱

The principle is not about judging the people of the past, their behavior and the - ۲ argument, opinion or stance of each. The problem is that the honesty and truth of the parties is evident and, therefore, one has to justify the actions taken. For example, .see the Persian translation of Ayyuha'l-Walad by Ghazali, pp. ۳۰-۱

their new needs because, in the first place, they deem such responses to be more appropriate for and more in harmony with their needs. In the second place, the (religious obligation stops them from doing anything that is non-Islamic.(۱

It is precisely because of this that many revolutionary Sunni Islamic thinkers have been reviewing their historical thought in an attempt to find responses to their serious and urgent needs. This was intended to find a more explicit, decisive and helpful criterion for analyzing and evaluating themselves, so as to see the truth as the truth even if it has been distorted by others, and to stand up against falsehood and help the truth. Accepting the principle that the mask of Islam impedes straightforward judgment and decision-making is equal to accepting the illegality of any action against a ruling system that commits any crime or treason by resorting to Muslim

appearances. So far as this principle, which is the result of recognizing the early Islamic history and protecting it against any criticism, has not collapsed, the problem will still be in place. It is because of this that Sunni jurisprudential and theological books have defined differently such subjects as allegiance [biy'ah], consensus [ijma'],religious authority [ijtihad], rejection [takhta'ah], acceptance [taswib], consensus of the People of Loosing and Binding [ahl-e hall wa 'aqd], caliphate and the caliphs' positions, guardianship [wilayat-e amr] and the need to obey the leader, and other subjects.(٢)

Revolutionaries and thinkers who have attempted to develop their ideology by maintaining this principle

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١- The tendency towards revolution and armed movements among the contemporary Muslim youth can be studied in Al-Faridah al-Gha'ibah by 'Abdu's-Salam Faraj, an Islamic Jihad theoretician who was executed in recent years. In a part of his book, after rejecting all the recommended and experimented solutions for Islamicizing the society, including establishing Islamic political parties, bringing up a generation of Muslim educated people to take care of the affairs, guiding the people and publicizing the religion, immigrating to another place to provide the ground for returning conqueringly and the like, he says, "In Islamic countries, the enemy is from within. In fact, it is he who has the command and is represented by governments that have taken the power away from the Muslims. This is why everybody must enter into the jihad." After providing some explanations, he adds, "In order to implement God's commands, one has to create an Islamic government. We do not insist on this or that result. The collapse of the infidel regime will provide everything to the Muslims.' The Prophet and the Pharaoh, pp. ٢٤٢-٧.

٢- Sa'd ad-Din Ibrahim thus describes the most important characteristic of Muslim fighters in Egypt in the ١٩٧٠'s and ١٩٨٠'s, "The practical violence of a group that has risen against the government and the others who act in the name of Islam." Asaf Husayn, Islamic Movements, p. ٢٩.

have actually failed. They wanted to make up for their ideological weakness by relying on individual faith, perseverance and devotion. This is impossible, at least in our time. If the necessary condition for achieving sociopolitical goals is the perseverance and resistance of the revolutionaries, the sufficient condition is undoubtedly the ideology and strategy in harmony with the nature of its goals and the zeitgeist and which at the same time have the power to go on, resist and respond.(١)

The problem indeed does not have to be limited to what was said above. Recognizing early Islam events and protecting them from criticism prevents the necessary proper religious intellectual and scientific development that the Muslims need at this time. Only part of this problem is revolutionary and challenging while, even to respond to this need and to lead it to the right path, a development has to occur in the set of beliefs. More important is that, in order to study the different subjects critically, including the religion and the history of religion, which are among the most important needs of the modern era, a solution has to be considered. It is not possible to defend the faith of individuals against the critiques of the modern era only because of the insistence of the former on dogmas that originated from the consensus of the Muslims in a certain part of the history rather than the religion itself.

Every religion has a set of absolute non-criticizable values and dogmas. This is because of the

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١- From among the Islamic intellectuals and writers, probably the first one who, in his words, tried to remove the mask of hypocrisy from the face of rulers pretending to be Islamic while in fact opposing it was Sayyid Qutb, especially in his last and most important book, Ma‘alim fi’t-Tariq, which was later subject to much criticism and was not entirely accepted other than by young people with revolutionary tendencies. Even Hasan al-Hadibi, the leader of Ikhwan al-Muslimin of Egpyt, explicitly criticized it in his Du‘at li-Iqdat, and Yusuf al-‘Azm, the best-known Ikhwanite scholar, criticized some of his thoughts in his Ra’id al-Fikr al-Islami al-Mu‘asir. However, the conditions in the

۱۹۷۰’s and ۱۹۸۰’s provided an appropriate ground for expansion and influence of his thoughts. In practice, all contemporary Islamic movements that have taken place in the Sunni and especially the Arab World have been influenced by the thoughts of Sayyid Qutb, whether they were accepted in their totality or not. However, this does not mean that they could not achieve a challenging ideology that was at the same time Islamic. They started out from a dead end, therefore, could not and cannot get anywhere. They cannot and shall not ignore their ideological principles to establish their ideology on foundations other than that. They can provide a different interpretation of these principles but cannot put them aside. When they do so, they will be criticized and they will not have any satisfactory solution and their ideology will not have a chance to succeed or continue. Their other mistake is that they tried to insist on the faith, persistence and devotion of the revolutionaries to guarantee achieving their goals. This is basically a wrong perception. They have deemed a part as the whole and tried to escape the dead end by emphasizing on it. It is strange that this mistake on their part is like that of the non-Islamic revolutionary groups. For example, the Fada’iyan-e Khalq (Devotees of the People) before the victory of the revolution in Iran had been deluded by a similar mistake. They criticized the Tudeh party members of Musaddiq’s time because of lack of persistence and thought that the only way to achieve victory was persistence and devotion. See the books written by Juz’i, Ahmadzadeh and Safa’i Farahani, especially the first one of the three. Also see Idi’ulozhi wa Inqilab (Ideology and the Revolution), pp. ۲۱۲-۲۰. On the importance of Ma‘alim fi’t-Tariq and the different views expressed about it, see Sayyid Qutb by ‘Abdullah ‘Awad, pp. ۳۲۵-۹.

nature of the religion and is not affected by the developments through time. However, this is not true about part of the beliefs that are rooted in the consensus among the believers rather than the religion itself and it cannot be defended forever against the scientific and historical criticisms. Resisting this critical current will entail escaping from religion or rebelling against its protectors and causing an ideological disorder.(۱)

Apart from this, it was a principle that everything that happened in that period was nothing but the realization of true Islam, and, in order to find out about the

applications and views of Islam in any respect which has an example in this era, one has to refer to that period. However, the important thing is that, in this time, there are sometimes various answers to a certain problem without any change in the ?conditions. Now, which answer has to be taken as true

For example, as to the selection of the caliph, there were various examples. Abu Bakr recommended ‘Umar in his will while ‘Umar recommended six people in his will and determined how the caliph had to be selected from among them. Also, Abu Bakr’s caliphate in the beginning received the allegiance of a few people. This and many other examples, especially in jurisprudential and theological problems, which resulted in various answers to be given to a certain problem, which were occasionally contradictory, later created many problems for Sunni theologians and jurisprudents in terms of determining the justified criterion. All of

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On the attempts of the new generation to liberate from religious dogmatism, see -۱ As-Sunnah an-Nabawiyyah bayn Ahl al-Fiqh wa Ahl al-Hadith, especially pp. ۷-۱۲, by Muhammad al-Ghazali, one of the best-known religious scholars of the present time. Also see Mufassal min al-‘Aqidah ila’th-Thawrah in five volumes, which is written by one of the best-informed contemporary intellectuals, Hasan Hanafi, especially vol. ۱, .pp. ۷-۴۷

(this was because of recognizing the early Islamic history in its entirety.(۱

Chapter ۳: Government and the Ruler

Government and the Ruler

It was briefly mentioned in the previous chapter how the early history of Islam was formed and what the attitude towards it was in the later years. This attitude was reflected in the entire Sunni jurisprudential and theological structure and political .thought. A brief introduction is necessary before entering the new discussion

We have already said that the Shi‘ites and the Sunnis, despite their basic common

principles, have two different jurisprudential and theological structures and have founded two different psychosocial structures in their followers. In order to clarify how the religious movements in these two realms were and are formed and what factors and foundations they are influenced by, one has to clarify how these two systems are and how they were formed throughout history. What is most important, in the meanwhile, is what principles the political thought of these two schools are based on and influenced by because the sociopolitical and even the intellectual and cultural movements of these two are inevitably influenced by these characteristics. Unless these characteristics are known and its results and consequences are valuated, the religious movements of these two sects will not be identified properly, .whether those that took place in the past or those that exist today

We said that one of the most important principles that has formed the political thought of the two is their perception and interpretation of the early history of Islam. The Sunni perception of this part

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For example, see Al-Ahkam as-Sultaniyyah, pp. ۵-۲۱ and Al-Ahkam as-Sultaniyyah -۱ .by Abu Ya'la, pp. ۱۹-۲۸

.of history is different from its reality

The second principle is the way Sunnis believe in the ruler simply because he is a ruler, i.e. without considering what occurred in the early history of Islam and the way it is perceived in the tradition. One has to see what their opinion is about the ruler and how this opinion is and may be reflected in their political thought. Finally, the third principle is that what was important to Sunni scholars, jurisprudents and theologians in connection with the government and its legality has been security rather than justice. They were concerned about security and the power that could provide and guarantee it rather than about justice or, for example, a precise implementation of the religious rules and the traditions of the Prophet (S) as they were in force at the time of the Prophet (S) himself. The Shi'ite opinion in the last two issues is different

from the Sunni one. This difference is reflected in the history of the religious and social .movements of the followers of these two schools

It is the people's love of and desire for justice that is the cause of political and social movements. Shi'ism, since the beginning of its history, was concerned about and emphasized the concept of justice and a strict implementation of the religious rules and defended and tried to realize the same as its mission while, according to Sunnism, the issue of justice has the second or even the third priority. What was and

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is important to them is merely having power and authority, in the shodow of which .security can indeed be achieved. We will discuss each of these points here

Status of Caliphate

We said in the previous chapter that the basic and primary factor in the development of the Sunni attitude towards the early history of Islam was Mu'awiyah's actions. His rivalry with and hostility to 'Ali's personality and position(۱) and his attempt to isolate his supporters, all of whom were his ideological opponents, led him to command to its governors to publicly curse 'Ali while forging sayings for others about virtues similar to .those of 'Ali and to propagate them, which they did

For many reasons, cursing 'Ali did not and could not last for a long time. One important reason was the virtues that had been forged for others. How could the others have such virtues while 'Ali, who was at least a person like them and a caliph, had the opposites of those virtues so as to be cursed?(۲) If they could even make the people have such beliefs, then the mass of the people would have beliefs similar to those of the Rebels and would indeed approach them while this was hated by the ruling system, both the Umayyad and the 'Abbasid, because the Rebels were their great enemies. Nevertheless, the second action had its influence and took the early history of Islam and the Muslims of the time to a high status, equal to that of Islam. Indeed, other than

p: ۱۲۲

۱ - Ibn Abi'l-Hadid says that a group of the Umayyad said to Mu'awiyah, "O', Commander of the Faithful, you achieved what you wanted. Why do you not stop cursing this man—'Ali ibn Abi Talib. He answered, "I swear by God, I will not stop until the minors grow up with it, the adults get old on it, and no narrator mentions any virtue of his." An-Nass wa'l-Ijtihad, p. ۴۹۹, quoted from Sharh Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol. ۱, p. ۴۶۳. Compare with what Abu Ja'far Iskafi said, "If God had not paid special attention to this man—Imam 'Ali—no saying would have remained now about his virtues because of the actions of the Umayyad and Marwan." For more examples, see Sharh Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol. ۴, pp. ۵۶-۱۱۶.

۲- Goldziher says that the Umayyad gave priority to the Feast Prayer over the regular prayer so that the people would hear what they said before dispersing. Then he adds, "The people would leave the mosque after the prayer in order not to hear the sermons, which involved cursing 'Ali." Goldziher, Muslim Studies, vol. ۲, p. ۵۱.

Mu'awiyah's plan, there were other factors in the meanwhile that would help consolidate and continue such an opinion, which we will deal with later.

The caliphs coming after the Senior Caliphs, both the Umayyad and the 'Abbasid, and the other persons who appeared in the history of Islam as caliphs and their caliphate was accepted by the people, such as the Mamluk caliphs in Egypt or the sultans of the second period in the Ottoman empire, in order to consolidate their position, needed to attach a religious status to themselves and to make the people accept this. The best means was to give a religious status, not to themselves, but to the position they were in so as to legalize themselves and make themselves accepted. In order to do this, they had to raise the position of the caliphs after the Prophet (S) and introduce their caliphate as a divine and religious position while further highlighting the supporters of the caliphs and the caliphate. In general, they had to give a religious definition to and sanctify the history of those times because, this way, their position of caliphate would be religiously necessary, and this would include the status on which they relied.(۱)

In fact, the Umayyad caliphs were not so willing to be identified as caliphs because they neither needed this nor was their Bedouin, pre-Islamic, negligent and reckless

nature consistant with such formalities. However, the ‘Abbasid could not remain on the scene without relying on it. Although their being in power

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In this regard, especially refer to Al-Islam wa Usul al-Hukm, which well analyzes -١ .and criticizes this current. pp. ١١٣-٣۶, ١٨٠-٢

for more than five hundred years was for a major part formal and apparent, yet it continued by resorting to such titles and, for many reasons, they developed the current that Mu‘awiyah had founded. Although many of Mu‘awiyah’s policies and, in general, those of the Umayyad were denied in the ‘Abbasid era, this was one of the exceptions that was approved because the holy and divine respect to the caliphs after the Prophet (S) directly helped sanctify the concept and system of caliphate and the (one who was in charge of it.(١)

The other factor that reinforced such a view was the need to confront Shi‘ites and the Rebels. The most important opponents of the caliphs, both Umayyad and ‘Abbasid, during the first two or even three centuries, were the Shi‘ites. Both of them had a critical attitude towards the early history of Islam. The Shi‘ite view is well-known, in which they considered it to be a period like the other parts of the history of Islam, without any difference or distinction. However, the Rebels approved of the first part of the period of the Senior Caliphs, which lasted to mid-‘Uthmanite period, while deemed the second part as polytheism and deserting the religion. In addition, their perception of the first part was not similar to that of the others and was different in certain ways. They were pigheaded people that were not willing to consider any individual or period as holy. It was only this period that they approved of without

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Contrary to the ‘Abbasid, the Umayyad neither needed the religion nor pretended -١ to believe in it. Their upbringing, psychology and temperament were rather Bedouin and of the pre-Islamic Ignorance type and they comported themselves accordingly.

Their politics was more like that of a tribal chief than a caliph or a sultan of a great empire, which brought about their rapid fall. Mu'awiyah cared more than the others about the appearances, saying to the Kufis, "My goal is ruling you not forcing you to say prayers or pay zakat (religious tax) because I know that you will do so." Al-Umawiyyun wa'l-Khilafah, p. ١٣. 'Abdu'l-Malik said openly, "O', people, come to the right path and give up whims, avoid dispersion and do not constantly call us to the method of the early Immigrants while you do not know what their method and actions were..." Al-Umawiyyun wa'l-Khilafah, p. ١٢٢. However, the 'Abbasids were not like that. They pretended to be religious and to practice the shari'ah as much as they could. "The caliphate of the 'Abbasid caliphs, especially in the early period, had a religious appearance so as to make them grand with the people. This was stronger in Mansur's time because, in his time, there were many people who rose up against the 'Abbasid caliphate..." Mabadi Nizam al-Hukm fi'l-Islam, p. ٥٨۴. This is an example of the Arabic and ignorant fanaticism of the Umayyad, "The Umayyad detested pledging allegiance to one whose mother had been a female slave." Tarikh Ibn 'Asakir, vol. ٥, p. ٢٠٥. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid says, "It was well-known among the Umayyad that their last caliph would be one whose mother is a female slave. Therefore, they did not give caliphate to such a person. If they were to do so, Muslimah ibn 'Abdu'l-Malik had priority over anyone else." Sharh Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol. ٧, p. ١٥٧. Also see Al-Umawiyyun wa'l-Khilafah, p. ۴٥, Fajr al-Islam, p. ٩١. The 'Abbasid method was precisely contrary to this. Not only would the 'Abbasids marry the liberated slaves, from ٨٠٠ A.D. onwards, there was no caliph who was born to a mother that was a free woman. G.F. Grunebaum, Classical Islam, p. ٨٠; Goldziher, Muslim Studies, vol. ٢, pp. ٣٨-٨٨. Concerning the 'Abbasid and the Umayyad politics, see the same book, pp. ٨٠-٩.

rejection.(١)

Now, one of the ways to confront these two groups in the public opinion of the Muslims was to say that they did not accept the early history of Islam. To achieve this goal, the best way was to praise it as much as possible. The more important and religiously more valuable and divine this period became with the mass of the people, it was better possible to disarm the opponents. One of the most important populist

pretexts they had was that they said to their opponents that you, who are considering us unjust and are opposing us, lack any legality because you do not respect or believe (in the early history of Islam and its characters.(٢

This accusation was especially effective against Shi'ites and was long used as the best propaganda tool against them. Many cases can be found in the past in which they suppressed the opposition at the early stage by using this means although this means has not been abandoned yet and is widely used especially by the Sa'udis and their colleagues and sympathetic thinkers. They wickedly present such a picture of early Islam that nullifies any critical attitude in advance. They try to highlight this in order to isolate Shi'ites and present them as abominable and to suppress any reformist movement under such claims because the reformist and revolutionary movements within the Sunni world in general have a critical attitude towards the early history of Islam and, principally, the history of Islam. When this attitude

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.Al-Bayan wa't-Tabyin, vol. ۲, p. ۱۰۲-۳ -۱

An example of condemnation of the Shi'ites because of their criticism of early - ۲ Islamic history can be found in Barbahari's Sharh as-Sunnah. Tabaqat al-Hanabilah, .vol. ۲, pp. ۱۸-۴۵

and way of thinking is questioned, those who believe in it will be doubted and this is (what is desired by their opponents.(۱

In fact, it was these two political factors that increasingly reinforced the religious and divine aspect of the early period. The post-Mu'awiyah caliphs needed it for many reasons and emphasized it. The need remained as long as there was caliphate, i.e. practically to the early present century. After that, it was needed by those in power .who considered themselves as benevolent descendants

Sanctifying Early Islam

In the meanwhile, other actions were also taken that further strengthened this

current, in which Mu‘awiyah still had the primary role. To defend his legality and truth, Mu‘awiyah resorted to another policy, which was very successful and contributed in sanctifying the image of the early history with the Muslims. He wanted to establish a relationship between himself and his truth and the first caliphs and their truth, especially Abu Bakr. However, as long as ‘Ali (‘a) was alive, this was not effective and ‘Ali did not allow such misuse. ‘Ali’s outstanding personality and his unique position and past and his being appointed as caliph by the majority of the people were the biggest impediment to use such means. However, when Imam ‘Ali (‘a) was martyred and Imam Hasan (‘a) became the leader, it was possible to use it. We had better hear .the story from Mu‘awiyah himself

In response to a letter from Imam Hasan (‘a), in which the issue of peace and stopping the war had been

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.Tahawwul wa Thubat, pp. ۸۷-۱۰۰ -۱

set forth, Mu‘awiyah wrote, “...when this nation disagreed on your virtues and past and your closeness to the Prophet (S) and your position in Islam and among the Muslims, they were not ignorant. They saw it better that the Qurayshis would be leaders because of their relationship with the Prophet. The senior members of the Quraysh, the Helpers, etc. from among them said, ‘Let’s choose as leader one from among Quraysh whose Islam is older, who is more knowledgeable about and .friendlier to God and who is more powerful in God’s affairs’, and they chose Abu Bakr

This was the decision of the men of wisdom, religious and virtues and those of the nation who were aware... If the Muslims had seen one among you who was able to do that, they would have not hesitated. They would have done what they thought was fit for Islam and the Muslims... The story of me and you is like that of you and Abu Bakr after the Prophet (S) passed away. If I saw you more fit to the affair of the nation, I would do what you are inviting me to. However, you know that I am more experienced as a ruler and am an elder man of politics and am older than you are.

Therefore, it would be more appropriate for you to do what you expect me to do and for you to accept to obey me…"(1)

While saying these, Mu'awiyah tries to resort to the same reasons for

1- Nazariyyah al-Imamah ladi ash-Shi'ah al-Ithna-'ashariyyah.

legalizing himself with which Abu Bakr had been legally appointed and tries to pretend that his story is like that of Abu Bakr, by saying that the same criteria that applied for legally appointing Abu Bakr applies to him too, so much so that even Imam Hasan ('a) has to obey him.

In this regard, Mahmud Subhi says, "This letter of Mu'awiyah is the first theological interpretation of the supporters of Sunnism and consensus on the issue of caliphate in general and that of allegiance to Abu Bakr in particular. While ascending the power, Mu'awiyah could achieve theological and ideological victory and, through this, he could express the beliefs of Sunni Muslims in general… He used this opportunity to undertake the defense of the caliphs and the senior Companions, thus giving religious acceptance to his claim in caliphate and cleverly setting forth his own claim in the form of defending Abu Bakr. According to this interpretation, he did not usurp the power and did not impose himself on the nation. His position was like that of Abu Bakr. He was more capable in administering the affairs and a better politician and more experienced and aged in dealing with various affairs. Thus, his claim of avenging 'Uthman while 'Ali ('a) was in charge turned into a more dangerous, effective and acceptable ideology that responded to his requests for becoming the caliph and stabilizing his position." (1)

The result is that, other than the factors already mentioned, that led Mu'awiyah to give a religious

.Ibid., p. ۳۲۱ -۱

stature to the early history of Islam and its characters in order to isolate his opponents, on top of them, Shi‘ites, and break down the position of ‘Ali in the public opinion, there were other factors that encouraged him to do this. His confrontation with Imam ‘Ali and his followers, whether during ‘Ali’s life or after, could not succeed without relying on this historical period. He needed it and made use of it cleverly and for various reasons, and such uses later found a high place in the Sunni jurisprudential and theological structure, especially in the issues of imamate and caliphate. Doubtless, if the main rival of Mu‘awiyah had been someone other than Imam ‘Ali, or a person other than one like Mu‘awiyah stood against ‘Ali, the history of those days would have been formed otherwise and most probably the Sunni jurisprudential and .theological structure would have had major differences with its presence structure

Other than the mentioned factors, which were mainly political, there were two other .factors that helped this current, which we will mention below

Later Events

The first factor was the need to respond to various religious, jurisprudential and theological problems, especially jurisprudential ones, which the Muslims faced from late or even mid first century [AH], for which there were no clear answers in the Prophet’s (S) tradition. They had to find solutions to such problems, and one of the best solutions was to consider the early history of Islam equal to Islam itself rather than looking for answers only in

.the Prophet’s (S) tradition. This was quite a natural thing to happen

The Islamic society in the Prophet’s (S) period was a closed and limited society with few needs and problems. Any new problem would be set forth to the Prophet (S) himself. The conditions changed after the rapid expansion of Islam, especially after the important early conquests ended, the religious passion was settled and the society calmed down in mid first century [AH]. The problem was not that the society

had grown in size. The qualitative complexity due to the quantitative development was far more and was increasingly complex. The tribes, cultures, philosophies, sects and religions were covered by the new power, which had religious claims. Such a gathering would entail numerous problems that required answers which had to be explicit, pragmatic and not merely theoretical because the society had to be administered with the same answers. These were actually laws that gave order to .and systematized the society

Meanwhile, the problem was that only a small fraction of these new problems were directly answered in the Prophet's (S) tradition.(۱) These questions were new subjects and, at that time, neither existed theoretically nor practical. However, they now required theoretical as well as practical responses. In the meanwhile, they had to give religious respect and recognition to a period that extended beyond the Prophet's (S) .life, and the latter included the period of the Senior Caliphs

In an impartial and realistic estimate, one has to say that they were right to do so

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For example, Miqrizi, who is one of the best-informed people on the history, culture -۱ and events of early Islam and the following centuries, rejects any phrase or narration from the Prophet (S) that involves a question by the Companions from the Prophet on such subjects as fate, God's attributes or similar verses and considers them to be fake, saying that the Companions' questions from the Prophet (S) had been only about worships and how to perform them. Miqrizi, Khutat, vol. ۴, p. ۱۸۰. A critique of .this view can be found in An-Nazm al-Islamiyyah, pp. ۷۴-۷

because, if there is only one part of the history of Islam that has to be recognized because of its apparent similarities to the Prophet's (S) period, it is exactly the same, especially since this period was agreed on and respected by the majority of Muslims while the subsequent periods were not so. As a result, this period was considered as the continuation of the Prophet's (S) tradition and contributed in responding to the numerous questions that had arisen, especially considering that in those days the

jurisprudential expertise had not yet developed as methodologically as it later did. So, (in every case, they had to refer to the explicit decrees.(١)

However, Shi'ites basically did not face such a problem. In their belief, the sayings and deeds of the Infallible Imams were like the Prophet's (S) tradition. This belief had neither been imposed by a historical necessity nor by any other factor. The natural and logical consequence was their belief in the principle of imamate the way they understood and interpreted it. Thus, the religious tradition according to them continued to the year ٢۶٠ AH, which was the year of the death of Imam 'Askari ('a). This rich and various tradition, being the outcome of responding to various issues that had been set forth during ٢٧٣ years since the Prophet's (S) mission, plus the period of the imamate to the beginning of the minor and also its emphasis on the principle of ijtihad (religious expertise and authority) and determining its fundamentals and

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A'lam al-Mawqi'in, vol. ۴, pp. ١١٨-۵۶, which provides a full discussion on the necessity -١ of following the Companions and the Followers, and also see Turath al-Khulafa' ar-Rashidin, pp. ١۴-۵. In ibn Hanbal's Sharh as-Sanah, Barbahari says about the need to follow the Companions, "Know that the religion is imitation, an imitation of the Prophet's companions... The Prophet told his Companions, 'Those of you who outlive me will witness many differences. I warn you not to get involved in new affairs because that will be misleading. It behooves you to follow my tradition and that of the Senior Caliphs.'" Quoted from Tabaqat al-Hanabilah, vol. ٢, p. ٢٩. Somewhere else, he says, "Let God dominates your self. Follow the Companions and be their true descendant and imitate them because the religion is imitation, an imitation of the Prophet (S) and the Companions. One who accepts them will not make mistakes. Therefore, imitate them and be comfortable and do not violate this..." Ibid., p. ٣٩. Somewhere else, he says more explicitly, "If you heard a man being sarcastic about the Prophet (S) and the Companions and not accepting them or denying some of the news relating to the Prophet (S), doubt his Islam. He is an irreligious person with a foul mouth as he is sarcastic about the Prophet (S) and his Companions. We know God, the

Prophet (S), the Qur'an, the good and evil, the world and the afterworld according to what remained from the past." Then he adds, "The Qur'an needs the tradition more than the tradition needs the Qur'an." Ibid., p. ٢٥.

limits, basically removed the need for things that were urgently needed by Sunnis.

Emotional Attractions

The second factor was emotional as well as religious. Basically, human beings psychologically and affectively tend to love whatever that is somehow related to the object or individual they are interested in, whether it is real or an illusion or unreal. It will just suffice for him to suppose that there is such a relation. This factor was much stronger and more effective in older times than it is now. The modern man is more unfocused intellectually and affectively. As a result, the depth and duration of his love is less and shorter. However, in the past, if someone loved an object or person, he would be attracted to it/him entirely and the stronger the attraction, the stronger would be the love of his dependents and any characteristic that he attached to his beloved one, would be attached to his dependents as well.

During the history of Islam, the Prophet (S) was always the most popular and the most sacred person. The most beautiful and most mystical descriptions were applied to him, especially by the Sufis who were pioneers in doing so. Naturally, the charisma of such an attractive person would be extended to his surrounding people. This was a natural human trend. It was impossible for one to love the Prophet (S) and not be attracted to his dependents. Here the problem was not who the dependents were and how they lived. The issue was that they surrounded

p: ١٣٢

the Prophet.

The Sufis and the Muslims in general during the history thus looked at the Prophet (S) and early Islam. In their view, it was the best period because it contained the Prophet (S) and those individuals were the best because they lived with the Prophet (S). This is indeed true but its meaning and limits should be defined. It is true that the Prophet's

(S) period was specially respected because the Prophet lived in that period and it is true that the people surrounding the Prophet (S) were fortunate to experience the Prophet's presence, but this did not entail the conclusion that the era of the Companions is the best period because of closeness to the Prophet (S) or, for example, Islam has to be identified with its help, and the Companions' being fortunate to experience the Prophet's (S) presence does not mean that they were, in practice, committed Muslims.(۱)

Nevertheless, this psychological mechanism extended the Prophet's (S) sacredness to the Companions and the Companions' time, and all of them were encircled by a halo of divinity. This in turn gave special sacredness to the current whose goal was to give special religious credit to early Islam. The question why the Shi'ites were not affected by this state and mechanism has a special reason. They always loved the Prophet (S), like the other Muslims did, and considered him to be the best person. However, because of sayings, which are entirely valid to them, they loved a special group rather than

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۱- Al-Fatawi al-Hadithah, p. ۳۰۵, about 'Abdullah ibn Mubarak, who expressed such a theory, and his personality and characteristics. See Al-Islam bayna'l-'Ulama wa'l-Hukkam, pp. ۲۲۸-۹.

the entire Companions. If there had not been such sayings, they would have extended the Prophet's (S) sacredness and position to the others as well, because this is human nature.

It would be appropriate here to mention an example and what value and position, according to the Muslims of the later periods, experiencing the Prophet's (S) presence had and how it became the most important and the most definitive criterion to judge the religious and spiritual qualifications of individuals.

While criticizing Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, who believed that there may be other individuals among the people of the later times more virtuous than the Companions, based on

the saying, “My nation is like rain. One does not know if the beginning or the end is better.” Ibn Hajr says, “This is a very rate theory which is not conformed by the Sayings.” Then, he sets forth his own theory by thus quoting a story from Ibn Mubarak, “This point is also approved by ‘Abdullah Bin Mubarak, who is well-known in the sciences and jurisprudence. He was asked which one of Mu‘awiyah or ‘Umar Bin ‘Abdu’l-‘Aziz were better. He said in response, ‘I swear by God that a dust in the nostril of Mu‘awiyah’s horse while besides the Prophet (S) is far better than a hundred people like ‘Umar Ibn ‘Abdu’l-‘Aziz.’ By saying this, he wanted to say the honor of accompanying the Prophet (S) and seeing him and being seen by him is a value that cannot be equaled by any action or

(honor.”(۱

Doubtless, all this was much influenced by politics. It should be admitted, however, that the Muslims grew with such a way of thinking and their mentalities and personalities were formed based on this, apart from the fact that they had to present a theological system compatible and homogeneous with a system that had been .contradictory from within

Principally, any true believer, no matter what he believes in, religion or else, tends to find his beliefs in a coherent and harmonious system without contradiction. This is one of his basic needs. The point is not that he has to do so in order to present his beliefs to the others or to defend the same. More important than this is his internal needs that will remain unfulfilled without such an attempt and practice. The peace of the human mind as to his beliefs is indebted to their harmony and homogeneity. An important part of one’s intellectual and scientific attempts, whether in the realm of religion, thought or science, is merely systematizing and coordinating one’s beliefs. .This is mainly due to the same internal need

An example of such an attempt can be found in the theory where it concerns the early Islamic Companions and personalities, “The best people in this nation and in all the nations after the Prophets (S) is Abu Bakr, then ‘Umar, then ‘Uthman and then ‘Ali (‘a).

This was heard from the Prophet (S) and shall not be denied. The best of the people ,after these are Talhah, Zubayr

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.Tabaqat al-Hanabilah, vol. ۲, p. ۲۱ -۱

Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas, Sa'id Ibn Zayd, 'Abdu'r-Rahman ibn 'Awf and Abu Ubaydah Jarrah. All of these had the capacity to be caliphs. The best of the people after them are the Prophet's Companions, the century in which the Prophet was appointed by God as prophet, the early Immigrants, the Helpers and those who prayed towards both of the Two Qiblahs. After them, the best of people are those who accompanied the Prophet (S), whether one day, one month, one year, less or more. We ask God to bless them and recount their virtues and ignore their mistakes and do not remember (any of them other than for their virtues..."(۱

The result is that the above and the other factors as a whole gave a special religious position and sanctity to early Islam, the Prophet's Companions and the Senior Caliphs in the eyes of Sunnis and there is not anyone among them who doubts these. This is a principle on which they have consensus. More importantly, they comprehend and interpret Islam in its light, so much so that one can say, without having this in mind, one cannot comprehend their understanding of Islam. Islam in its entirety, from jurisprudence and analysis and history to theology, philosophy and mysticism, especially where it relates to political and religious discussions probably has the most .differences in terms of how Sunnis and Shi'ites comprehend it

It is exactly at this point that Shi'ites and Sunnis can understand each other less and less because they do not

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Concerning this theory and that there were hypocrites and corrupt people indeed -۱ among the Prophet's (S) Companions and they were even cursed by the Prophet (S), see Al-Milal wa'n-Nihal, Subhani, pp. ۱۹۱-۲۲۸, and also An-Nass wa'l-Ijtihad, pp. ۵۱۹-۲۵,

and especially the lively discussion by Muhammad al-Tijani in this respect in Thumma .Ihtadayt, pp. ٧٧-١٢٢, and Adwa' 'ala as-Sunnah al-Muhammadiyyah, p. ٣٢٩, ٣٥۶-۶٣

notice that their beliefs and theories are based on two different intellectual, philosophical, theological and historical foundations and systems. Consequently, they come across problems in their discussions, talks and mutual understanding and assistance. Any of them views the beliefs of the other through his own religious view and, therefore, does not understand him and has expectations contrary to the other's .principles and fundamentals

This is not a theoretical problem; it is a tangible reality. Unless the Shi'ites and the Sunnis have full knowledge of the characteristics of the intellectual and doctrinal systems of each other and from where their obligations originate, they will not be able to talk to each other or to reach a useful and effective understanding or cooperation. As we said, this is truer about political and religious issues. It was because of this (reason that we presented this discussion more elaborately.(١

Now let's see what the consequences of such beliefs are, i.e. what their doctrinal, psychological, social and political outcomes are. Here, we will mention only two important results of it, which is of special importance in connection with the present .discussion

Inability to Judge Properly

We said that the early period of Islam is of special importance to Sunnis. However, the issue is that these periods are full of differences, tensions and conflicts, especially among the senior Companions. Many of the Promised Ten ['Asharah Mubashshirah], whose high religious rank was not at all doubted, draw swords on each other. Now, how can this period and these individuals be of a high

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Especially see Al-Fasl fi'l-Milal wa'l-Ahwa' wa'n-Nihal, vol. ۴, p. ٩۴, and Al-Fusul al- -١ .Muhimmah fi Ta'lif al-Ummah, especially pp. ٧-۶٠, and Thumma Ihtadayta, pp. ۴١-۴

religious rank while at the same time stand up against each other and shed each other's blood? Here, it is not the question of individuals; it is rather the question of criteria and rules. The problem is what the criteria are for judging the truth or falsehood and, basically, what the truth and falsehood is, how one has to live and what his stance should be in order to be on the right side. Apart from this, does he have to fight the falsehood or not and, if so, which is the falsehood and what is the ?criterion to judge it

The fact is that they could not find a satisfactory answer. Therefore, they resorted to justifications and interpretations that would be too long to mention here. However, what mattered was that such a problem left its effect on Sunni psychological and doctrinal structure, i.e., since the problem had not been solved—and could not be considering its hypotheses—they tried to leave its similar examples unsolved. In other words, the final solution was that, since the problem has no answer, one must not try to solve it, so much so that some people considered any such attempt as prohibited and irreligious. The principle was that they had to remain silent towards it and be content to the virtues that had been quoted in this respect, and not even examine the .truth or falsehood of such accounts

However, the point was that silence towards this issue resulted in silence towards other similar issues. It

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is exactly from this that one can see the traces of such silence on the ideological and psychological structure of the Sunnis, which deeply affected the formation of their .sociopolitical and religious history

As an example, consider the words of Ibn Hanbal quoted here, "Ibn Hanbal revered all the Companions of the Prophet (S) and did not say anything about them other than their virtues. It was exactly because of this that, despite admitting that 'Ali's caliphate was legal and right, he did not say even a word in criticizing Mu'awiyah, as he also did not say anything about the Siffin and Jamal wars, in which many of the Companions

were killed. All of this was in order not to say a word to blame the Companions… To him, the companions were of an equal rank and he said nothing but nice things about them. He used to say, 'Mu'awiyah, 'Amru ibn al-'As and Abu Musa Ash'ari are among those about whom God has said in the Qur'an, 'One can see signs of prostration on their face.'"(۱)

Also one of the analysis of the book As-Sanah by Ibn Hanbal thus says in his analysis, "If you see somebody arguing the deeds of the Companions and talks sarcastically about them, know that he is a man of caprice because the Prophet (S) said, 'When there is a mention of my Companions, hesitate'. This is because the Prophet knew that they would make mistakes after his death, but he did not treat them but

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۱- Al-A'immah al-Arba'ah, vol. ۴, p. ۱۱۷.

nicely and said, 'Let go of my Companions. Do not talk but nicely about them and do not mention any of the mistakes that they did…' Know that the one who questions the conduct of the Prophet's (S) Companions, in fact he questions the Prophet (S) himself and tormenting him in his grave."(۱)

Ibn Juzzi, the well-known jurisprudent and theologian of the ۸th century A.H., gives the same advice more explicitly, "Concerning the conflict between 'Ali ('a) and Mu'awiyah, you had better not deal with it, remember them as good people and interpret what happened, in the best way possible because this is an issue of ijtihad (religious judgment). However, 'Ali and his followers were on the right side because they judged and made the right judgment and will be rewarded but Mu'awiyah and his advocates judged wrongly and are excused. What we have to do is to respect and love these two and the other Companions."(۲) Numerous other such examples can be given.

Nevertheless, their perception of the early Islam currents and events led them to the conclusion and rather made them believe that there can be no two Muslims who can contradict or argue against and oppose each other while one is absolutely right and

the other absolutely wrong. They especially emphasized that, in the conflict between two Muslims, if they are Muslims, i.e. they have the qualifications and meet the criteria that can define them as Muslims, it is certain that none of them can be wrong. Here the

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۱- Tabaqat al-Hanabilah, vol. ۲, pp. ۳۵-۷. Cf. Al-'Awasim min al-Qawasim fi'dh-Dhab 'an Sunnah Abi'l-Qasim, vol. ۳, pp. ۲۳-۲۳۰.

۲- Al-Qawanin al-Fiqhiyyah, p. ۱۸.

problem is not who is on the right side. What matters is that there is no wrong side in this. It seems as if they admitted implicitly that the truth of the parties is relative in such circumstances rather than absolute because, when there is no falsehood, then either party has to have a degree of truth on its side.

Hesitating on the Issue of 'Ashura

This mentality and this way of thinking on their part is so strong and deeply rooted that many of them hesitated and chose to be silent on the issue of 'Ashura. If there are some who fail to do so, it is because of certain reasons that they consider as valid, i.e. they resort to certain sayings from the Prophet (S) on the virtues of Imam Husayn ('a) and to other sayings that explicitly or implicitly mention 'Ashura to say Husayn was right and Yazid wrong. It means that, without considering such sayings, they cannot judge even this case in order to say who was wrong and who was right. Why is this so? The answer is the same reasons that were mentioned. It also has other jurisprudential and theological reasons.

Let's put it more clearly. If we ignore all the sayings that are directly or indirectly related to the story of 'Ashura and the position of the Prophet's (S) Family and the Pure Five [khamsih-ye tayyibah] and the vices of the Umayyad, the Sunni religious structure in its entirety and the resulting religious and doctrinal psychology is so that they will

hesitate on such an apparent and clear issue as that of ‘Ashura. And they did so. Because of the reasons and criteria that they had accepted, they could not say which .one was right and which wrong, and failed to say why it was so

The strange thing is that some even go beyond this and condemn Imam Husayn (‘a) in their own view according to religious and jurisprudential criteria and acquit and support Yazid. Abu Bakr Bin al-‘Arabi and his fellow thinkers, whether in the past or in the present, are among them. He openly praises Yazid and considers rising to be a mistake. He says, “He did not accept the advice of the most knowledgeable person of his time, ‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Abbas, and deviated from the opinion of the Shaykh of the Companions, ‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Umar. He sought the end at the beginning and the truth in the deviated way. While caliphate was lost by his brother, who was accompanied by a large army and the senior men of the tribe, how could he return it with the help of the rabble of Kufah? The senior Companions disapproved of what he wanted to do. He should have obeyed what his ancestor said, “Corruption and disturbance will soon rise. Then, you shall kill the one who wants to create discord among this ummah while it is united, no matter who he is.” Husayn had to show further patience and to pledge allegiance to Yazid. It was not Yazid and his

governor, ‘Ubaydullah ibn Ziyad who killed him. Those killed him who asked him to go (to Kufah and then gave him to the rabble of Kufah.”(۱

Here it is not important what the purpose and motivation of Ibn al-‘Arabi is in such criticism from a sympathetic religious stance. More important is that his words are ultimately compatible with the accepted Sunni jurisprudential and theological principles. In fact, it is the dignity of Imam Husayn (‘a) and corruption of Yazid that stops such an explicit expression of opinion by Sunni clerics in general. In other words, the secondary necessities had a greater share in their disagreement with Ibn ‘Arabi than difference in the primary fundamentals. If there is a difference here, it is secondary and probably pertinent to the past rather than principal and

(fundamental.(۲

It is exactly because of this reason that many Sunni scholars had hesitated and have chosen to be silent in this respect. Now one has to see why they hesitated. Why did many Sunni clerics hesitate in condemning Yazid and some of them principally consider it to be the wrong thing to do? The fact is that some of those who hesitate or prohibit such condemnation were not people who would give up the afterworld for this world and express such opinions to the pleasure of the rulers. Some of them basically expressed such an opinion when it was contrary to the public opinion or even the ruling power, yet they insisted on their opinion as a religious

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۱- Al-'Awasim min al-Qawasim, pp. ۲۳۱-۲. Mahmud Subhi says in respect of the sharp criticism by Ibn 'Arabi and his likes, "Despite the fact that the theory of those looking at the appearances and the predecessors regarding Imam Husayn originated in the religious beliefs, the fact is that their view was not merely religious. Most of them were from Syria, like Ibn Taymiyyah, or from Andalusia, like Ibn Hazm or Ibn 'Arabi, and their theories were not void of tribal elements or Umayyad fanaticism. Principally, their views had been formed in conflict with the views of the Shi'ites... and whereas the martyrdom of Imam Husayn was one of the basic sources of Shi'ite belief and the continuation of the various branches of Shi'ism were indebted to it, blaming the event or showing it as unimportant or attributing the crime to the Kufis was an attempt to ruin the image of Shi'ism." Nazariyyah al-Imamah, p. ۳۳۷.

۲- Concerning the other criticisms of Imam Husain, see Nazariyyah al-Imamah, pp. ۳۳۸-۹.

duty. In the conflict between their jurisprudential and theological fundamentals and the secondary obligations resulting from validating the sayings regarding Imam Husayn's ('a) dignity and the vices of Yazid or even the sayings that directly or indirectly mentioned the story of 'Ashura and the innocent martyrdom of the Imam, they chose to be silent. In such circumstances, the right way was caution and caution meant hesitation and silence.(۱)

Anyhow, the answer has to be sought in the same cautious religious psychology that .was the product of sanctifying the early history of Islam and its characters

It has to be mentioned that Shi'ites and Sunnis, despite some similarities, differ in their applications and, to some extent, concept of caution, whether doctrinal cautions that relate to the principles of the beliefs or the jurisprudential cautions that concern practical orders. This shall be further elaborated on later. When the general certain principle is that all those characters are holy and even at the same level religiously or spiritually while they may have fought each other, commitment to such a principle would lead one to caution in his later judgments. This would be a crippling caution that would not let them judge an incident where both parties are well-known, such as that of 'Ashura, and they would prefer to hesitate on this and equally acquit the parties while stopping the exploration or judgment by others as a religious duty and in order .to call to the good and stop the bad

For example, Mahmud Subhi thus talks

۱- The strange thing is that Ibn Hanbal, quoting Ibn 'Arabi, just by relying on what he says from Yazid, considers him to be a highly respected person of a high position so much so that in his book, Kitab az-Zuhd, names him among the pious people, the Companions and the Followers. Find the elaboration in Al-'Awasim min al-Qawasim, pp. ۲۳۲-۳. Concerning defending Yazid, with a religious motivation at that, see also the footnotes of Muhibb ad-Din Khatib on the same book, pp. ۲۲۷-۸. Concerning defending Mu'awiyah's action in appointing Yazid as crown prince, see also his footnotes in the .same book, pp. ۲۱۵-۶

about the theological and ideological consequences of Imam Husayn's ('a) martyrdom among Sunnis who, in his words, would rather choose intermediate and indirect solutions, "The Sunni reaction to Imam Husayn's ('a) martyrdom was very difficult and painful because any attempt to find an intermediate solution that would be favorable to Sunnis based on which they could approve of the Imam's uprisings and express

friendship to his enemies would fail. It was the story of 'Ashura that made such an attempt fail." Then, he goes on to mention some evidence about his theory.(1)

The story of such a way of thinking is as old as Islam itself. It has always been, now is and will later be an issue. There is almost no great Sunni cleric who did not say a word about this. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid quotes such views under different titles in the different parts of his book, which is in fact a great encyclopedia of all that relates to early Islam. An important part of the last volume of his book is dedicated to such discussions. It would be appropriate here to mention the theory of Ghazali on the Companions and then Yazid. He is selected here because of his comprehensiveness, his scientific credibility, his public acceptance, his piety and his waiver of this world's benefits, so that it would not be presumed that such words are because of ignorance or for serving the rulers of the time or for public acceptance.(2)

Expressing how our belief about the Companions should be,

۱- Nazariyyah al-Imamah ladi ash-Shi'ah al-Ithna-'ashariyyah, pp. ۳۴۷-۸.
۲- Sharh Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol. ۲, pp. ۸-۳۵.

he says, "Take the middle path rather than any of the extremes in this respect and know that, in this respect, you can be suspicious or make sarcastic remarks about a Muslim on no realistic basic, then you will be a liar, or you can have good intentions about a Muslim and avoid being bitter to him without your lack of suspicion being realistic. In the meanwhile, an error accompanied by good intentions about a Muslim is closer to the right path than blaming him. For example, if someone avoids cursing Lucifer, Abu Jahl or Abu Lahab or any other mean person during his life, such avoidance will not harm him. However, if one is sarcastic to an innocent Muslim, he has put himself in hell."(1) Such a think is also said by Imam al-Haramayn Juwayni more elaborately, which is quoted by Ibn Abi'l-Hadid in the ۲۰th volume of his book.

In his most elaborate and reputable book Ihya' al-'Ulum, Ghazali discusses if it is allowed to curse Yazid or not, which is summarized as follows, "Cursing Yazid and his

likes is not jurisprudentially permissible. So long as it is not certain that Yazid ordered the killing of Imam Husayn ('a) and was content to this and so long as his belief in Islam is certain, it is not permissible to curse him because, according to authentic documents and sayings of the Prophet, cursing a Muslim is forbidden."(۲)

What is all this the result of? It is the result of what has

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۱- Al-Iqtisad fi'l-I'tiqad, pp. ۲۰۳-۵; the theories of Imam al-Haramayn Juwayni in Sharh Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol. ۲۰, pp.۱۰-۱۲. The critique of his views, which is one of the best and most impartial critiques, can be found Ibid., pp. ۱۳-۳۴.

۲- Ayyuha'l-Walad, Persian translation, p. ۳۰, quoting from Ghazalinameh, pp. ۴۱۹-۳۶. Ghazali's argument saying "Because, according to the sayings of the Prophet and other proper documents, it is prohibited to curse Muslims" is explained with better arguments and more comprehensively by his master, Imam al-Haramayn. See Sharh Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol. ۲۰, p. ۱۱.

been said already, i.e. a national and logical result of the doctrinal and psychological structure that was initially formed on such a basis. The problem is not what the external factors are. The problem is what kind of thought and mentality we use when setting out to know them. Such a mentality and thought also views and evaluates the story of 'Ashura according to their own standards and criteria. This is a natural current.

It is interesting that such a view is so acceptable and certain to some Sunni clergies that they have expressed doubts about the sayings that directly mention the event of 'Ashura and the vices of Yazid. It is certain that a group of them were hired by the sultans and preached for them, and they still are doing so. However, there were certain of them that really thought and believed so.(۱)

We see that how far the psychological backgrounds and the mental and doctrinal structures of the followers of these two schools differ, at least in this part. In one, the mental structure has been formed so that it loses the power to judge differently two

Muslims or two groups of Muslims that have stood up to fight each other while, in the other, the intellectual and psychological structure is so that it can make only differing judgments, i.e. it can consider one side to be the absolute truth while the other to be the absolute falsehood. Certainly, this fine and at the same time critical and important

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۱ - Concerning the views of the advocates and opponents of cursing Yazid and the sayings for each and the arguments of the two parties, see Ibn al-Jawzi's Ar-Radd 'ala'l-Muta'assib al-'Anid, which is one of the best and the well-documented books.

difference will create two different social and cultural backgrounds for sociopolitical developments.

The strength and severity of revolutionary passion in a society that, while confronting harsh events, considers a group to be of the Husyan-type and the opposite group as of the Yazid-type are certainly much different than the revolutionary passion of a society according to which the history, or at least the history of Islam, is neither absolutely Yazidi nor absolutely Husyani (if he assumes that Yazid was absolutely wrong and Husyan was absolutely right). Here, it is not a talk about which of them is a good thought and which a bad one. What we mean is to express the characteristics of each of them. They have different spirits and mentalities and they look at issues differently.

Therefore, they can understand each other with difficulty because of having two different views about a single issue; two views that are based on absolutely different preliminaries. If a Sunni can probably comprehend a Shi'ite on these issues and can understand historical and political currents the way the Shi'ite does, it is because he has adopted a Shi'ite mentality and a Shi'ite spirit rather than because he has been able to view issues like a Shi'ite by having the spirit, mentality and psychology of his own and his school. What Ba'inah says about Shi'ites is also true. They cannot look at the historical and social events like a Sunni. Their mental and doctrinal structures are different and, naturally, they cannot view

(and evaluate issues similarly.(۱)

A New Perception in the Light of the New Experience

If there are individuals among Sunnis today, especially their youth, who have a view close to that of Shi'ites and have even adopted a view like them, it is because of the influence of factors other than their beliefs and religious and historical heritage on their psychological, intellectual and doctrinal structures. The course of economic, social and cultural developments in some Muslim countries has been so as to create in the youth and students a psychology to understand issues and currents differently. The more rapid and deeper the amount of developments has been and the more traditional and complex the society was, the stronger and more inclusive this .characteristic has been

In the same manner, the higher the revolutionary potential in a country, the more frequent such a state has been because a necessary element of being revolutionary and having revolutionary thoughts, especially among the youth, is to have a dialectic understanding of the history and the present situation. Since the economic, social, political and intellectual moves and developments in the Third World and in the Muslim World in the last two to three decades have contributed to the growth, development and deepening of such a tendency and thought, such spirits and .conditions have also been created

Right now we stop explaining this point because a necessary condition for being revolutionary, where it relates to the mass of the people and not, for example, the elite and cultured individuals who have revolutionary tendencies despite the depth of

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۱- The historical views and perceptions of Shi'ites and Sunnis were different from the very beginning. The difference was limited in the past mainly to the early history of Islam while nowadays it encompasses the entire history of Islam and rather the

history in its general sense. Concerning the difference of the views and perceptions of the early history of Islam, compare Al-'Awasim min al-Qawasim and the introduction and footnotes of Muhibb ad-Din Khatib on the same with, for example, An-Nass wa'l-Ijtihad, and Al-Ghadir, especially vols. ۴, ۶, ۷. However, now a development has occurred, in the sense that the historical perception of Sunni intellectuals, especially to the early history of Islam has become closer to that of Shi'ites for certain reasons. The first reason is the reduced religious fanaticism; the second is their approach towards the new rules of historical critique. Perhaps the best representative of this group is Taha Husayn in his book Al-Fitnah al-Kubra, in which his views and analyses both in the first and the second volumes are close and rather in agreement with Shi'ite views on many issues although the Late Amini in Al-Ghadir, vol. ۹, pp. ۲۵۱-۴, and Anwar al-Jundi in Mu'allifat fi'l-Mizan, pp. ۶-۱۹, criticize this book. Nevertheless, numerous other examples like his can be provided. For example, see Andisheh-ye Siyasi dar Islam-e Mu'asir (Political Thought in Contemporary Islam), pp. ۳۰۸-۳۲, where it explains the method of study and analysis of contemporary Sunni writers about the episode of 'Ashura. However, there are still many among the religious scholars as well as intellectuals who follow the fanatic method of the predecessors. For example, see the footnotes of Muhammad Hamid al-Faqi, the editor of the book Iqtida' as-Sirat al-Mustaqim by Ibn Taymiyyah, who also heads the group Ansar as-Sunnah al-Muhammadiyyah, especially pp. ۱۶۵-۶, and the book Al-Tarikh al-Islami wa Fikr al-Qarn al-'Ishrin, especially the introduction and pp. ۸۷-۱۰۶, authored by Faruq 'Umar, .who is an intellectual

their thought and their extensive knowledge and experience, is the ability to perceive .things dialectically

This discussion can be studied theoretically as well as historically and socially, similarly to the attitude of Shi'ites and Sunnis in the past decades towards Marxism, which has dialectics as the basis of its philosophy, and the differences they had and the causes of these differences, and also the study of the quality of the effects of the developments of the recent period in creating a spirit and situation among Shi'ites and (Sunnis.(۱

Because of the importance of this recent issue, it is necessary to quote some of the more serious parts of the book Ma‘alim fi’t-Tariq, which is the most important and effective intellectual guide of the defiant Sunni generation in the present century. As we will see, their attitude and that of Shi‘ites and especially the revolutionary Shi‘ites in the present century are similar to each other because of their dialectical .understanding of the ongoing currents

That is to say that the mask of Islam and the appearances of the religion do not prevent them from forming definite sound judgments about the illegality of those wearing such masks and those who are pretentious. However, they have achieved this point through a way different from the way Shi‘ites achieved it, whether in the .past or contemporary times

According to Shi‘ites, who have inherited the heritage of the Infallible Imams, this is one of the primary evident principles. Principally, one of the primary goals of the

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.Maqime Rodinron, Marqiom and the Muslim World, pp. ۳۴-۵۹, ۱۹۴-۲۰۳ -۱

Imams during their lives was to remove the mask of those who misused the religion, sought power or were ignorant. However, according to what was said, Sunnis could not do so because their beliefs, thoughts and mentalities grew in a way that they .could not act or even judge so

Therefore, when the sociopolitical, intellectual and religious pressures of the recent decades made some Sunni thinkers seek a solution and made the revolutionary religious youth listen to, support and even follow them, they had to solve this problem from another point and to remain indifferent to the beliefs, thoughts and mentalities of their ancestors and contemporaries who thought otherwise. Although this in turn .created new problems, it opened a new way

A careful consideration of the following sentences shows how different the analytical method, way of evaluation, concept of Islam, the goals and finally the prevailing spirit

are different from the Sunni religious experience and jurisprudential and theological .heritage throughout the history

The New Ways of Sayyid Qutb

Nowadays, we are in an age of ignorance similar to the pre-Islamic ignorance or“ rather darker than that. All that is around us is ignorance… The conceptions and beliefs of the people, their habits and imitations, the sources of their culture, their arts and literature, their laws and regulations, even much of what we consider as Islamic culture, Islamic sources, Islamic philosophy and Islamic thought is ignorance… All of ”!…them are products of this ignorance

We have to liberate ourselves from the ignorant society and the ignorant“ conceptions, imitations and leadership… and

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especially in our times… our duty is not to converse with the ignorant society and to accept his friendship because, with this quality, which is the quality of ignorance, conversation is impossible. Our duty is to create a change within ourselves based on which we can evolve the society. The first duty is to change the reality of this society. Our duty is to change the foundation of this ignorance reality. It is a fact that is essentially against the Islamic way and method and, with force and pressure, it (impeded our living according to what God has asked us.”(۱

Islam does not recognize more than two types of society. One is the ignorant society“ and the other the Islamic society. The Islamic society is the society in which Islam has been realized in all the dimensions of belief and workshop, the shari‘ah and the system, manners and morals. The ignorant society is the society in which Islam is not practiced, neither in the beliefs or conceptions of Islam nor in its values and rules nor in its system and laws nor in its manners and morals. The Islamic society is not the society that consists of individuals who call themselves Muslims, in which the shari‘ah is not the law, no matter if they say their prayers, fast, go on hajj or not. The Islamic society is not the society in which the members of the society devise an Islam of their

own which was not provided by the Prophet and

.Ma'alim at-Tariq, pp. ۱۷-۱۹ -۱

".[which they call the "developed Islam" [islam-e mutatawwir

The ignorant society may have different forms. It may be a society in which they" deny God and interpret the history materially and dialectically and in which a social system is realized that is named 'scientific socialism'. It may also be a society that does not deny God but which limits God only to the heavens and deprives Him from the earth. They neither submit to His laws nor to his stable values. It allows the people to worship God in churches and mosques but does not allow them require the rule of the religious laws in their material lives. It thus denies the divinity of God or suspends it while the Qur'an says explicitly, 'It is He who is worshiped in the sky and is worshiped on the earth.' Therefore, such a society is not one of God's religion because God says, 'He has ordered you not to worship but Him. This is the solid and sound religion.' Such a society will be an ignorant one although they worship God... The Islamic society is the only progressive society and the ignorant societies, with the different forms of ignorance, are retarded societies. This great truth has to be (clarified."(۱

Islam does not accept partnership with ignorance, neither in terms of conceptions" nor in the conditions and grounds that entail such conceptions. Either Islam or ignorance; there is no middle choice, half of which is Islam and the other half ignorance, and which will be

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.Ibid., pp. ۱۰۵-۶ -۱

accepted by Islam and with which Islam will be content... Islam's view is clear in that the true path is one and it cannot be multiple in number, and that all that is other than

that is misleading. These two cannot be covered by each other’s dress or be mixed with each other. The order is either that of God or that of ignorance. The law is either God’s law or it is caprice. There are frequent verses of the Qur’an on this, ‘And judge them according to what God revealed and do not follow their whims. Fear them may they not lead you to disturbance on some of what God has revealed to you...’ These are only two and there is no third one to them. Either accepting God’s message and that of the Prophet or obeying one’s whims...”(۱)

“Providing the ground for the rule of God’s divine laws on the earth and destroying human rule and that of the human laws, depriving from power those who have assumed it and returning it to God... will not be attained only by propaganda and preaching because the authoritarian despots and those who have assumed God’s power will not give up power by propaganda and advice. If they did, the prophets would easily be able to establish God’s religion on the earth while this is contrary to what history shows. The history of this religion is like that of the other religions.”

“This public notification for liberation of ‘man’ on the “earth” from

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۱- Ibid., pp. ۱۴۹-۵۰.

any power that is other than God’s and to the effect that divinity only belongs to Him is not a theoretical, philosophical or passive notification. It is a dynamic, real and active one, one that seeks to realize God’s law on the earth and practically release the servants to make them God’s servants... therefore, besides ‘expression’, there shall be ‘dynamism’ as well... so as to deal with ‘reality’ in all its dimensions.”(۱)

The above sentences are quoted from Sayyid Qutb’s book, which, despite becoming a bit lengthy, we mentioned due to the importance they had for clarifying this and the other discussions. The fact is that the doctrinal, intellectual and political fundamentals of the present Islamic movement will not be known within the Sunni territory, unless this book is well studied and understood. It is interesting that, even the revolutionary thinkers that did not share his ideas are also somehow affected by this book. They

began where he began and more or less with the same method. Their difference is rather in the different sources and accepting the priority of the sources not any other .factor

Importance of Sayyid Qutb's Thought

The basic cause of this current is not, for example, the vastness of Qutb or the untainted grandeur of his thought. Undoubtedly, he is a creative and pure thinker. The problem is that, the welcome given to him, more than being due to his personality and thought, is due to the fact that so far no one has been able to set forth Islamic political and

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.Ibid., pp. ۶۰-۱ -۱

revolutionary thoughts from any other point without denying the sanctity of the early period, i.e. the period of the Senior Caliphs—while he strongly criticizes Mu'awiyah and the Umayyad as well as the subsequent periods and, in certain cases, even 'Uthman. He embarked on a way that the others have to take, unless another way is (opened.(۱

Since the book was published, there have been many people who opposed and criticized it on various religious or non-religious grounds. However, despite all these, the book is still the most reliable and inspiring part of the Islamic sources for Muslim youth who were led by the rapid and deep developments of the recent decades towards revolutionary and armed activities and tendencies while also seeking the answer within Islam. The vast welcome that Qutb received from the youth, especially this book of his, was due to the lack of revolutionary Islamic thoughts in the Sunni society and basically in the Sunni history. The need to such thoughts is a serious real need that requires an answer while no one but him has a word to say on this. It is .natural that others are rushing towards him

Apart from this, how Qutb or any other committed believer thinker could create a

crack in this lofty damn and demand an answer from the collection of principles or even its constituents directly or indirectly and in conflict with the appropriate necessary response. If this damn is still to be maintained as it was and is not to be

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۱- Shaykh Sabki, the head of the Al-Azhar Fatwa Committee, says about Qutb's book, "Although at first glance the book Ma'alim fi't-Tariq may seem a work that has relied on Islam, but its incendiary method and its disastrous results on the young people and readers with insufficient information on Islam is disgusting one." "Describing any period other than the one close to the Prophet's time as a period of Ignorance is an act of infidelity." Payambar wa Fir'un (The Prophet and the Pharaoh), p. ۶۲. Concerning the criticisms of other critics, see Ibid., pp. ۶۳-۷۱. In this regard, see especially Ra'id al-Fikr al-Islami al-Mu'asir by Yusuf al-'Azm, pp. ۳۰۵-۹. Also Sayyid Qutb: Khulasah Hayatih wa Minhajih fi'l-Harikah, pp. ۲۱۵-۲۰ on those who have criticized or defended Qutb on religious grounds. See Sayyid Qutb: Al-Adib an-Naqid by 'Abdullah 'Awad al-Khass, pp. ۳۲۵-۹.

collapsed by historical critique, then what way there will be other than the one resorted to by Qutb or similar ways in order to provide an answer?

Muslim critics in general have criticized him for his considering the Muslim society as an ignorant one and also as a battlefield. However, they have not been taking into account under what intellectual or doctrinal pressure arising from the real needs of today's generation he has done so. The principle, according to him and his fellow thinkers and followers, was to find an answer, and it is still so. Therefore, what other way could he take to achieve his intended purpose? His desired purpose was "to write an instruction for the pioneers of the Islamic movement to tell them how to begin taking an action and how to rise to fight the ignorance that is deeply-rooted throughout the entire territory; pioneers who are in need of the signs of the way—Ma'alim at-Tariq—signs with whose help they can find out about their mission, duty and goal as well as the beginning point of this long journey... and to find out where to approach the people and where to get away from them; to know the characteristics

of the ignorance and to know how to talk to the ignorant people of the time in the language of Islam and on what issues to address them…"(١)

In an impartial estimate, one has to say that, considering the doctrinal limitations, pressures and necessities under which he lived and thought,

p: ١٥٧

١- Ma'alim fi't-Tariq, p. ٩.

Qutb was successful as a whole. His critics either failed to take into account his theological limitations and obligations or ignored the pressures or necessities that he faced.

Here we do not mean to study and evaluate Qutb's theories. Rather, we want to describe how Sunni jurisprudence and theology and the subsequent intellectual and doctrinal structure react to the severe sociopolitical and cultural currents and with what considerations. As Sayyid Qutb was a living example of such a committed and religious while at the same time revolutionary attitude, we studied some of his views and which point he began his revolutionary Islamic thought and why he chose this point. For him to prove the religious necessity and obligation to deny the ruling system of his society, he had to begin from this point and to organize his ideology by relying on that.(١)

Blaming Historical Critiques

We study the second consequence, which has similarities to and common points with the first consequence independently since the quality of its affects on the history and the present circumstances is different from the consequences of the first.

A natural and logical result of accepting the religious credibility and the divine stature of the early period, despite all its numerous internal contradictions, was blaming historical and religious critiques, i.e. accepting, without any research or investigation, that the Muslims of this period were all outstanding and good and each performed their duty and are, therefore, rewarded by paradise and we are not in a position to

question what they did. A direct

To find out in brief about the situation and conditions in which Qutb wrote the book -۱ Ma'alim fi't-Tariq and about a summary of the views of his supporters and opponents, .see Sayyid Qutb: Al-Adib an-Naqid, pp. ۳۲۵-۹

result of such a belief was a form of spiritual, psychological and theological .conservatism against the Prophet's (S) Companions

However, when such a spirit was created, it was not limited to the Companions and their time and, rather, covered the entire history of Islam while this was in contradiction with the spirit of research and study of the religious qualifications of individuals and whether they were right or wrong or whether they publicized the truth .or falsehood. We called this historical critique

A Shi'ite would not be subject to such a dilemma because he had a critical approach towards early Islam and had the same attitude towards the entire history of Islam while criticizing the early Muslims as strongly and baldly as he criticized those deviating from the path of Islam. Therefore, it would not be difficult for him to criticize, for example, Yazid, Marwan, 'Abdu'l-Malik, Hisham, Mansur, Harun, Mutawakkil or Hajjaj or Ibn Ziyad or even the bad jurisprudents or reporters of sayings or scholars .because of what they did

The interesting point is that the issue goes far beyond this to them because, in their view, the criterion is truth and falsehood and, therefore, they can evaluate the Shi'ites themselves with the same criterion. The problem is not that people in power such as Yazid, Mansur or Mutawakkil are criticized. More important than that is that a person such as Shah 'Abbas is criticized. Not only he, but all the Shi'ites kings, whether Deylami, Saffavid, Afsharid, Zandi or Qajarid

.are criticized

As it has already been mentioned, in such cases, the only critical factor is not the perception of these two schools towards early Islam, yet it is one of the most important and effective factors with them. It is impossible for a Sunni to criticize, with a religious purpose, a king equal to Shah 'Abbas among Sunnis. This is the point. Today, the society is open and anyone can say a word and give an opinion. A writer or even a university student can question all the sacred aspects of the religion. However, no religious or committed person, despite the open atmosphere, can go beyond the religious limits and rules in which he believes and to doubt the religious grounds provided from them. Nevertheless, the point is that no committed believer Sunni can explicitly criticize a character equal to or even lower in rank than Shah 'Abbas. It would be an opposition to their jurisprudential and theological fundamentals and the (consensus they have reached.(١

What was said has many effects and consequences. The problem is not just its jurisprudential and theological outcome. Its historical, social, cultural and political consequences, especially in the contemporary time, are far more important and critical. The concept of history is different with us and them, be it religious, national or tribal or clan-based. History in its nature, and here we mean the history of Islam, is of special value and importance to them that cannot and must not be ignored. However, it is basically not

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For example, Sabki said in criticizing Qutb, "Qutb uses the concept of God's orders -١ the way the Rebels used it, so as to call the Muslims to opposition to any worldly rule." He adds, "On the contrary, the Qur'an has ordered the Muslims to obey the ruler and the ruler has to rule his people with justice. In addition, most of the leaders in Islamic countries are good people." Payambar wa Fir'un (The Prophet and the Pharaoh), p. ۶٢. .See also Ash-Shi'ah wa'l-Hakimun, p. ٧; Al-Fikr as-Siyasi ash-Shi'i, p. ٢۶٩

so among Shi'ites. According to a Sunni, quite contrary to a Shi'ite, the history of

Islam, if not a sacred one, cannot be criticized either. Although Sunnis in general tend to consider their past sacred, humane and glorious, if there is a group that does not think so, at least it does not criticize it from a religious stance and does not consider it to be the story of oppressions, violations, and whims and irreligious acts of the caliphs, sultans and rulers.(۱)

Nevertheless, according to them and from the humane point of view, if it is not worthy of respect and pride, it cannot be condemned either. In the same manner, their historical understanding is far stronger than that of ours. Those who condemn the history in advance cannot give any value to it. Since they follow their religious taste not to see the negative points of history, they consider it as a set of glorious and prideful events and acts. This history is the history of their religion; the history of their glorious deeds and prideful acts. It is the history of their conquests and jihads, the history of their valor and manly acts, of their scholars and scientists, poets and artists, glorious culture and civilization and, finally, the history of their magnificent powerful caliphs and sultans and even the history and mythology of the One Thousand and One Night, of those who symbolized the power, glory and stature of Islam and Muslims.(۲)

However, because of the psychological drive in

۱- The best example of this historical perception is provided in Al-'Awasim min al-Qawasim, and the contemporary footnotes by Muhibb ad-Din Khatib on the same book. Interestingly, even Ibn 'Arabi strongly criticizes historians such as Ibn Qutaybah, Mas'udi and even an individual such as Mubarrid who, in his words, have revealed many untold parts of the history, Al-'Awasim min al-Qawasim, pp. ۲۴۸-۹. He strongly criticizes Ibn Qutaybah and his book Al-Imamah wa's-Siyasah, and considers him to be a Shi'ite while he is not a Shi'ite at all. The best reason is the book Ta'wil Mukhtalif al-Hadith, especially pp. ۷۰-۳. He and his likes would like to have a grand history without contradictions and do not like to depict it otherwise. Therefore, among the historians, he only likes Tabari and considers him to be more reliable, so much as to think that one does not have to listen to anyone other than Tabari. Ibid., p. ۲۴۸.

Muhibb ad-Din Khatib defends Ibn ‘Arabi’s views more strongly. This can be depicted from his footnotes. For example, he does not attribute Al-Imamah wa’s-Siyasah to Ibn Qutaybah and considers Mas‘udi to be a Shi‘ite and says that Mubarrid has tendencies like that of the Rebels. In this regard, see Tahawwul wa Thubat, pp. ۱۲۱-۲۱۴.

۲- Sunnis view the history optimistically, especially where it concerns Islam and the Muslims. They see themselves as the inheritors of this valuable and proud heritage and would react strongly to anyone who means to deny or underestimates them. For example, see the various rejections written on the book Al-Islam wa Usul al-Hukm, from Khidr Husayn to Diya’ ad-Din ar-Ris, all of whom have strongly criticized his critical, or in their words, pessimistic attitude towards the history. See especially Al-Islam wa’l-Khilafah fi’l-‘Aṣr al-Ḥadith, pp. ۲۵۰-۹۲, and Muhammad ‘Amarah’s introduction to Al-Islam wa Usul al-Hukm, pp. ۷۱-۹۴. It is interesting that this optimistic view of the history was warmly welcomed among the Sunnis of the new period, especially the new generation of intellectuals. They returned to their history and past for many reasons, the most important ones of which were awareness of their identity, constant humiliation before the West, the westerners’ admitting the grand value of the Islamic heritage, the need to have a jumping point to enter the modern world and, finally, the connection of these discussions to the policies of those in power. For example, see Al-Tarikh al-Islami wa Fikr al-Qarn al-‘Ishrin. However, this time it was not like in the past to look at it positively. The point was to show it as proud and grand and to believe this and to make the others believe it also. The purpose was not to discover the past because the discovery had been already made. The purpose was to prove the grandeur. This entailed numerous intellectual, ideological and idealistic disorders. They could not know anymore who they were and are and what abilities and problems they have and what they want and what they should want. Grunebaum thus quotes Gibb, one of the greatest contemporary Arab studies scholars about these disorderly intellectual and mental conditions, “In ۱۹۴۲, Gibb said with sorrow, ‘So far, I have not seen even a single book written in a European language in which an Arab, from any group, seeks to help the European student find out about the roots of the Arabic culture. Apart from this, I have not so far seen any book in the Arabic language that can clearly analyze the meaning of Arabic culture for Arabs

themselves.'" Then he adds, "This can be generalized to non-Arabs and their failure to introduce and interpret their culture for themselves and for the westerners." This is still true and it seems that it will remain true for years to come... Such religious, political and cultural goals are an impediment to attain a research intended to interpret the Islamic civilization. Whenever the Middle Eastern Muslims want to talk about their past or about the West, their judgment is political in the first place." G.E. .von Grunebaum, Islam, ۱۹۴۹, pp. ۱۸۵-۶; also see Tahawwul wa Thubat, pp. ۱۷۳-۹۹

them, consider it negative rather than positive points and, naturally, they not only do not like it, but escape from it as well. This is true even about their own history, i.e. the history of the Shi'ite sultans and dynasties. In their opinion, this history is one of oppressions, murders and bloodsheds; it is the history of tyranny and despotism, irreligiousness and disbelief, hypocrisy and flattery and, finally, that of the unknown victims who were crushed by the beasts and buried at the foot of the high palaces of the powerful and the rich. One views the history through its glory while the other through its justice and religiousness and we can at least say that one has chosen such a rule, rightly or wrongly, in his subconscious and tries to exaggerate in what he is (sensitive to and to show the past the way he likes to.(۱

We can see how different these two images are. It is not to say which one is real or closer to reality or both are equally far from reality. It is to say that the two ways of viewing renders two different sets of results, the most important being that there is more continuation and establishment in the Sunni history than in the Shi'ite one—i.e. the history of independent Shi'ite dynasties and powers. The former never deny the past while the latter generally do so. The former consider the present as the continuation of the past while the latter consider the present to

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۱- Principally, one of the most important and rather emotional and popular subjects in contemporary Shi'ite religious literature, at least in Iran, is criticizing those in power, so much so that the writers and intellectuals in recent decades consider it as one of .their duties

be the denial of the past. Even in the severest forms of Islamic revolutionary movements, one cannot find a movement the basis of whose work is the absolute denial of the past. It is difficult to find an example here whose goals do not include (denial of the past.(۱

A comprehensive expression of the results of these two attitudes requires being provided separately. This relates to such important issues as the Islamic identity and nationality, cultural identity and independence, historical backing and heritage, independent identity and social developments, all of which are among the most urgent and basic problems of the day affecting the Muslims. In order to find answers .to these questions, one has to study the issue carefully and analytically

Indeed, some changes have occurred in Shi'ism as in Sunnism. Although many Sunnis even in the modern times look at their past in the same manner, the number of those who deal with it critically is not small. The pressure of the necessities of modern life and the expansion of rationalism and criticism has been more powerful and critical .than such beliefs

The fact that such an attitude has not been changed effectively by such necessities is due to other obligations that are the products of modern times. In an age when everyone had to define and determine their own historical heritage and cultural identity, the Muslims and especially the Arabs had to make themselves known. They had to rely on it so as to avoid the constant humiliation of the

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As an example, compare the historical continuity within the Iranian and Ottoman - ۱ .territories in the last five centuries

.westerners

Naturally, under such pressure and painful conditions, not only they had to insist on the prideful elements of their civilization and culture and deny the manifestations of its weakness, the more important thing was that they basically did not see anything

other than its weak points. The point was not for them to deny the weak points. Basically, such points would not attract their attention. If there was not such a point, the attitude and way of thought inherited from the old times would be totally eliminated or at least would be less important than it is now and the Arab World would live in intellectual and cultural conditions far different from what it now has.(١)

Abdu'r–Razzaq's Historical Perception'

It would be appropriate now to quote from Al-Islam wa Usul al-Hukm by 'Abdu'r-Razzaq, where he criticizes the past, including the early Islamic period and that of the following caliphs. Although, from this point of view, he is not in a position similar to that of Sayyid Qutb, he is one of the most important and deepest pioneers of enlightened thinking in this respect and one of the most effective and influential figures in this respect although, for certain reasons, his reputation does not equal his intellectual influence.

There are sociopolitical reasons for this. The ruling politics of Egypt during Nasir and before that and the politics ruling the entire Arab World at that time and even for the time being was emphasizing Arab nationalism and propagating and sanctifying it. The Nasiris and Arab leftists

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١- To find out about the Arab intellectual developments in relation to the sociopolitical developments of the contemporary era, see Tahawwul wa Thubat, pp. ٣٢-۵٨, ١٧۴-٨٢; and also the article Modernization of Islam and the Theory of Borrowing a Culture in the book, G.E. von Grunebaum, Islam, ١٩۴٩, pp. ١٨۵-۶.

welcomed 'Abdu'r-Razzaq since he fought part of the old traditions, especially the ones that were reactionary in their view. However, they did not like his criticisms of the past history and heritage. Their goal was to make this past seem as beautiful, glorious and humane as possible. Therefore, they opposed him and his fellow thinkers.(١)

Socially, during his life 'Abdu'r-Razzaq did not have much chance of influence and progress. Because of his books, the religious groups, who constituted the majority, had a feeling of rancor about him. Even the religious and revolutionary youth of the following periods, who had thoughts and beliefs strongly opposite to those of the religious people of the time of the writing of the book, disliked him, because he believed that religion and politics are separate and should be separate. Otherwise, it would be politics that would put religion at its service rather than vice versa. Therefore, the two must be separate. Such a theory was contrary to the beliefs and (ideals of the young people as to the realities and needs of their time.(۲

Because of these reasons, he could not find a social and intellectual position that would suit him. However, it is not important how influential he was and why he was that influential. The important thing is that he set forth theories that, both because of their truth and their harmony and agreement with the modern requirements were more likely to be influential in a way that would without doubt be more extensive and

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۱ - Concerning the leftist welcome of 'Abdu'r-Razzaq's book and also that of the liberals, see Al-Islam wa'l-Khilafah fi'l-'Aṣr al-Ḥadith, pp. ۹-۲۱. They described it as 'an incendiary book', having made a 'fire that has not been put out yet.', 'the most important Islamic book in Egypt's political history', 'the most important Islamic book', 'The big crisis begins.', 'scientist against the king', 'the great trial of a scholar accused of infidelity', 'The king has risen up against a lonely helpless scholar.' In view of the developments that the Muslim World and the Arab World went through in the ۸۰'s, the book, or at least what is provided in it, will be further contemplated and welcomed in the future as it has been reprinted several times in recent years. This is an .unprecedented current

۲ - For example, see Nizam al-Islam by Muhammad al-Mubarak, pp. ۵-۲۹, and also .Ma'alim al-Khilafah al-Islamiyyah, especially pp. ۷۱-۸۳

critical in the future. However, less the Arab fanaticism becomes for glorifying the .past, his historical attitude and that of his fellow thinkers would be welcomed more

What was said about 'Abdu'r-Razzaq is just intended for clarifying the position of his attitude and his historical views. The purpose is to reflect on his words in order to clarify the thought of historical critique among Sunnis where it relates to their .ideological foundations

Undoubtedly, one has to say that the basis of caliphate has always consisted of" violence and domination. History does not remember any caliph, unless his name is accompanied by horrible armed forces surrounding him, a violent force that supports him and drawn swords that guard him. It would not be an exaggeration to say that any single ring of caliphate has a sign of violence and domination. Yes, what is known as caliphate stands but on human heads and is established only on necks. What is known as the crown is not alive other than by taking lives and is not powerful other than with the power it takes away from the others. It does not have any glory other than the one given to it by the others, like the night which will make the day shorter if it is made longer and its glory is from the sparkling of the swords and the fire of the (fights."(١

The zeal to protect the property made the king support his throne against anything" that was likely to shake it or disgrace

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.Al-Islam wa Usul al-Hukm, p. ۱۲۹ -۱

it or reduce its sanctity. Therefore, it was natural for the king to be violent and to evilly shed blood while getting control over one who tried to disobey him. Therefore, it was natural that he would be the sworn enemy of any discussion, even the scientific one; discussions that, in his view, might damage the columns of his throne or expose it to a risk although it might be a risk far away. It is from this point that the sultanate puts (pressure on the freedom of science and the centers of education..."(١

The tangible fact that is approved by reason as well as by history, whether in the past" or in the present history, is that the maintenance of religious appearance and acts does not just depend on the type of government that is called caliphate neither by

jurisprudents nor to those whom the people call the caliphs. The fact is that the global expediency of the Muslims does not depend on it either... Rather, one has to say that caliphate has always been and still is a disgrace for Islam and Muslims. It has been the source of any evil and corruption..."(۲)

"Islam, as you know it, was a high invitation that God made for the happiness and salvation of the people of this world, including easterners and westerners, Arabs and non-Arabs, men and women, the rich and the poor, the learned and the ignorant. It is a single religion that God intended on communicating to man and to

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۱- Ibid., p. ۱۳۲.

۲- Ibid., p. ۱۳۶.

cover the other parts as well. Islam was not an Arabic call or an Arabic unity or an Arabic religion. Islam did not give superiority to one nation over another, to one language over another, to one land over another, to one time over another or to one generation over another, unless according to piety."(۱)

"If you look carefully at the backgrounds resulting in the allegiance with Abu Bakr and his caliphate, you will find out that it was a political allegiance, had all the characteristics of the government in contemporary times and was obtained by relying on power and the sword."(۲)

"Perhaps some of those whom Abu Bakr fought did not want to give up religion and become infidels on the ground of not paying the zakat. The problem was that they had not accepted Abu Bakr like some of the senior Muslims and it was natural that they would not pay zakat to him since they did not recognize him so as to obey him. Whenever one carefully examines all that the history recounts about the rebels against Abu Bakr, whom were called the apostates, and contemplates their fights, which were known as the Rejection War, one feels how much of history is dark and oppressive. However, there is always a ray of the light of truth in the dark of history, which will one day catch the attention of the scholars. May they find the truth through

(that way."(٣

From early Islamic times, there was an assumption among Muslims that"

p: ١۶٨

.Ibid., p. ١۶٨ -١

.Ibid., p. ١٧۵ -٢

Ibid., p. ١٧٨. The rightness of Abu Bakr's fight by determining religious tax is so - ٣ unanimously agreed on by Sunnis that they have defined numerous jurisprudential .precepts for it. See Fiqh as-Sunnah, by al-Sayyid Sabiq, vol. ١, pp. ٢٨٧-٩٣

the caliphate is a religious position and regency on behalf of the Prophet. This was to the benefit of the kings, who propagated this mistake so as to obtain shields for the protection of their thrones, to be supported against the rebels. They still do so in different ways—there are so many such ways if the seeker pays due attention to them—so as to make the people believe that obeying the caliphs is obeying God and ".rebelling against them is rebelling against God

However, the subsequent caliphs were not satisfied with this and were not satisfied" with what Abu Bakr was satisfied with and did not show anger on what made him angry, and called the sultan God's caliph on the earth... Then, other religious discussions were added to caliphate and were made part of the belief in unity. A Muslim would learn that besides the attributes of God and his Prophet and these were induced to him as the Two Testimonies were induced to him. This was the crime of the kings and their oppression against the Muslims. They misled and blinded them. They hid the new ways by resorting to the religion and they cheated them and limited their wisdom in the name of the religion... They even limited their religious understanding, closed their eyes and deprived them from the other doors of science that somehow (related to caliphate..."(١

Was there a reason other than the love of caliphate and the eruption of power that" made Yazid shed the

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Ibid., p. ۱۸۱. Even those who did not accept the religious and rational necessity of -۱ caliphate admitted its necessity because of the consensus of the Muslims. See An-Nazm al-Islamiyyah, pp. ۲۸۰-۹۳, in which Arnold's views are criticized.

clean blood of Husayn, the son of the Prophet's daughter? Was there a reason other than this which gave Yazid domination over the first capital of the first caliphate, the city of the Prophet, which he disgraced? Was there a reason other than this that made 'Abdu'l-Malik disgrace God's house? Was there a reason other than this that made Abu'l-'Abbas thirst for and shed blood? Thus, the 'Abbasids were made subject to murder and some of them rebelled against the other..."(۱)

Such an attitude and analysis cannot be found in the past as part of the causes, some of which were mentioned. This is the result of the developments and the necessities of the recent century and, as you see, has been made very similar to the historical perception and the method of analysis of Shi'ites. This is a current that will go forward despite the many impediments on its way.(۲)

Here, part of the first discussion is ended, which is why the Shi'ite and the Sunni perceptions of early Islamic history are different and how such a difference was created and what were its origins and what were the results and consequents in the entire religious thought and mentality of the two and how it affected the intellectual, psychological and doctrinal structures of these two. This was the first foundation in the development of the political thought of these two. Now let's examine the second principle, i.e. how the two look at the ruler in the sense of the ruler proper.

The Sunni View about the Ruler

For

Ibid., p. ۱۳۱ -۱.

.See Al-‘Aqidah wa’th-Thawrah -٢

the time being, I set aside the Shi‘ite view in this respect because the readers are sufficiently familiar with it. We have to see what the Sunni view is about the ruler and .what it has been affected by and what effects and consequences it had in practice

The fact is that, despite some consensus in principle among Sunnis throughout the history in this respect, the issue is not clear in all its aspects. The reason for this is also clear because this is a religious problem which, at the same time, had much friction with the political rule while those in power constantly required the religion and put pressure on it so as for the latter to recognize it, that is to say, the religion had to take a form that could respond to their wishes and desires. Perhaps no other part of religion has been so much under different types of pressure in all aspects and was .never exploited so much

Consequently, the references concerning this subject are also abundant as well as various and rather scattered and contradictory. The book Kanz al-A‘mal, which is in fact a big classified encyclopedia of Sunni tradition sayings, quotes about ۴۰۰ sayings only in Kitab al-‘Imarah, which directly deals with this issue. This is a small part of the sayings available in this respect because the great part of the sayings that can be used deal with it indirectly and are not mentioned in this book.(١)

Without consideration to the study of the series

.Kanz al-‘Ummal, ۶, pp. ۴-٨٩ -١

of documents and the men of the sayings, indeed according to the Sunni rather than the Shi‘ite criteria, and by considering the subject in question and the variety and contradiction between them, it can easily be discovered that they have been subject to active forgery. Although there have been few scholars and sayings scholars who let themselves criticize these texts, this seems evident at first sight while, considering the involvement of politics; one has to say that this is also natural.

The fact that hardly anyone has dared to make such criticism is important in itself because the various issues concerning this subject have been so much subject to consensus and agreement throughout history and especially after the final defeat of the Mu'tazilites and the taking of power by the Ash'arites that there has principally been no question regarding the truth or falsehood of the primary references. The issue was not anymore the question whether the texts were valid according to the existing principles of statesmanship or wisdom. The issue was that any attempt to reach a different interpretation or expression was condemned in advance since it .would break up the consensus of the jurisprudents, theologians and sayings scholars

There was another problem in the meanwhile, which was the fear of accusations, especially by scholars who were directly or indirectly supported and approved by the rulers because any investigation in this respect would result in the decline of the ruler's position and acceptability. What practically existed was the final limit of the

p: ۱۷۲

theory that was likely to be set forth on the position of the ruler per se and in order to consolidate his position. Thus, any new attempt could not further reinforce their position and would probably help weaken them. When the thought was accepted as a principle that merely resorting to violent means and force would legalize the position of one who resorted to them by using the force of the sword and by shedding blood, therefore obeying him would be legal and any rising against him would be prohibited religiously, then here would remain no room for further strengthening to be achieved by further adjustment and collection and interpretation of the texts. Because of this, neither the ruling body would like such discussions and investigations nor their accompanying scholars. These two and other factors kept this discussion unpurified .and un-criticized

An important person who, in the middle of the third decade of the present century and simultaneously with the final fall of the Ottoman caliphate, interpreted and analyzed this problem otherwise was 'Ali 'Abdu'r-Razzaq, the author of the book Al-Islam wa Usul al-Hukm, which at that time aroused a turmoil throughout the Muslim World,

especially in the Arab World. He indirectly dealt with the discussion of caliphate and its historical and religious position and the subject of its religious necessity. In those days, with the fall of the Ottoman caliphate, this attracted a great deal of attention. .He discussed imamate and the government by providing rejecting arguments

The turmoil that was

created by the book showed how far Sunni beliefs in such cases are un-criticizable and un-arguable. The fact is that such rows, more than—in the words of 'Abdu'r-Razzaq's opponents—showing the antireligious or anti-Islamic tendencies of the author or, for example, his infidelity or apostasy, show the Sunni hypersensitivity to discussions that he had criticized and analyzed. Otherwise, there were many writers at that time who doubted even the principal issues of Islam while none of them met with such severe and full-fledged reactions. It went so far that it was said, "Since the printing industry entered our countries, no book has been printed that aroused so (much turmoil and evil as that aroused by 'Abdu'r-Razzaq's."(۱

The Government and the Ruler

Prior to entering this discussion, there is a point to be noted. It is that, according to Sunnis, the government means an Islamic and religious government. Its attributes are one thing and the ruler and his qualifications are another thing. These two are two separate categories despite their internal relation and have been formed under the .effect of two different series of factors

Their view of the government is affected by the Qur'an, the Prophet's (S) tradition and probably the heritage of the Companions. However, their view of the ruler is mainly or rather entirely affected by the historical and political situation and conditions in the first days and their later periods to early 'Abbasid period. In clearer words, their understanding of the government is affected by the theoretical fundamentals of Islam and their understanding of the

۱- Al-Islam wa'l-Khilafah fi'l-'Aṣr al-Ḥadith, p. ۳۱. Despite the uproar aroused by Al-Islam wa Usul al-Hukm, especially in religious circles, the author's thoughts were welcomed and accepted by some religious scholars, among whom were 'Abdu'l-Hamid Mutawalli. He did not deny the legality of the caliphate system, like 'Abdu'r-Razzaq did, and rather believed that establishing such a system would put the Islamic ummah in difficulty and indeed the shari'ah has prevented difficulty. Apart from this, establishing this system is an impossible thing to do. It even has to be said that the Islam had not advised any specific system. He finally concluded that caliphate is not from Islam and is not related to it. Ma'alim al-Khilafah fi'l-Fikr as-Siyasi al-Islami, pp. ۵۴۸-۵۰, quoting from Mutawalli's book, Mabadi Nizam al-Hukm fi'l-Islam, pp. ۷۴-۵.

ruler per se is affected by historical realities. It might be appropriate to say that they are idealistic concerning the government while realistic about the ruler. In their view, there is no relationship between the two—quite the opposite to that of Shi'ites—and they are of two different categories and have to be looked at differently.(۱)

Now we have to see why it was so. Islam is a vast inclusive religion. It is a religion as well as a government, worship, law and politics. These characteristics are based on the essence of Islam as a religion. A Muslim, like a believer in any other religion, has to believe in Islam in its entirety. Because of this, the non-worshipping parts cannot be ignored. A Muslim cannot be a Muslim while forgetting these parts. If he does not wish to or cannot practice them, he cannot believe in them and be committed to them because this is contradictory to the truth of his beliefs.

However, this is one side of the issue. These are theoretical considerations that will be otherwise in practice, as they were. It is true that Islam is a religion as well as a government and it is the application of the Qur'an as well as the tradition. However, one has to see which ruler is to have control of the government and what the Qur'an and the tradition say in this respect and whether what these two say is the same as what was realized or perhaps the issue was realized

۱- Whereas the political and governmental concepts and principally whatever that relates to imamate and caliphate are historical facts of early Islam in the opinion of Sunnis, and it can even be said that such concepts and definitions are not but theorizing the events of those times—which were considered as important as the religion and the Prophet's tradition—are far more non-idealistic and realistic and conservative, so much as if they do not submit other than to the existing reality and are not willing to disturb the present situation to achieve a more desirable one. They insist so much on this that they consider taking such an action unauthorized and illegal. The principle is that the present situation, though not ideal, is in the final analysis better than any change and has to be maintained. This, in their view, would be to the benefit of the people both in this world and in the afterworld. In this respect, see Al-Mawaqif, pp. ۳۹۶-۷, where it rejects the theory of those who resort to the 'no loss' rule to nullify the need to have a sultan or to obey him. The rejection of the author of Mawaqif is the best and shortest expression of Sunni political thought. In this respect, see A'lam al-Mawqi'in, ۳, pp. ۳-۷, and especially As-Siyasat ash-Shar'iyyah, pp. ۳-۱۷. There were people in the meanwhile who, with full commitment to the principle, recommended social reforms if they were quiet and not disastrous, headed by Ibn Taymiyyah. Somewhere in his book, he says that the goal is the rule of the religion and this is proven by the Qur'anic verses and the religious tradition. He says, "Then, if the goal is this, one has to see which of the candidates is best suitable for realizing this goal and then choose him as the ruler." Ibid., p. ۲۴. There will be many results to such a point of view. When the purpose was maintaining the status quo and reforming it so long as this does not result in a general change or probably political development, naturally the rules for recognizing the good and bad and what one has to do and not to do will change entirely. The criterion will be the existing reality rather than ideas behind it, which for example originate from or at least are inspired by the religious ideology. Consider what Ibn Hanbal has said, as quoted by Ibn Taymiyyah, "Ibn Hanbal was asked about two men both of whom are army generals. One is a powerful roué while the other is weak and benevolent. Which of them has to go on with jihad?" He said in response, "The one who is a roué and powerful, his power is for Muslims while his bad attributes are for himself while the one who is benevolent but weak, his good attitudes are for himself while his weakness are for Muslims. Then,

one has to go to jihad with the powerful roué." Then he justifies and supplements his response by resorting to a saying from the Prophet (S), "The Prophet (S) said, "God approves this religion with roués..." p. ١٧. Again, Ibn Taymiyyah says, "A great scholar was asked, 'If for the position of a judge, there is only a corrupt wise person and a religious ignorant person, which one has a higher priority?'. He said, 'If, due to domination of corruption, a religious person is more in demand, then the latter has priority but if, due to the complexity of legal problems, an expert is needed, the former.'" Then he adds, "As it is permissible to give lead to individuals who do not have all the qualifications if they are the best of the people, it is therefore compulsory to cooperate with them and to try to improve the conditions until what the people are looking for is realized...", pp. ٢٠-١. He also says somewhere else, "Cooperation is of two types, one for the good and piety, such as cooperation for jihad, for administering punishments and rights; this is the type of cooperation that was ordered by God and His Prophet and one who, fearing that he might be doing the wrong thing, fails to do them, has failed to do a compulsory duty, assuming that he is pious while it is likely that fear and laxity may be mistaken for scrupulosity as both constitute omitting an action. The second type of cooperation is sin and oppression, like contributing in shedding some blood or taking a respected property or beating someone who does not deserve to be beaten, and the like. This is the type of cooperation that was prohibited by God and His Prophet.", p. ٤٢. Based on such an attitude, he perceives and interprets social disorders otherwise. He does not consider the sultan to be the source of corruption, attributing part of this to the people. His view is not merely political, it is sociocultural as well. The title of Chapter ٣ of his book As-Siyasah ash-Shar'iyyah is 'On the Oppression of Governors and of the People'. Somewhere on pages ٣٨-٤٢, he says, "Much oppression is done by the governors and the people. They take what is not allowed and prohibit what is necessary to be done. Sometimes soldiers and farmers treat each other unjustly. Some people refuse to go on a jihad and the governors hold as treasury God's property, which is not to be held as treasury...", pp. ٣٨-٩. The fact is that this way of thinking has a long history. He says, "Once a group of Kufi people went to 'Umar to complain about the governor, Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas. He said, 'O' people, who of you, the Kufi people will suffice me and make me assured? If I appoint a pious person on them, they make him unable and say, 'You have appointed

a weak person as governor.’ If I appoint them a powerful person, they will mislead him and make him a traitor and say, ‘You have appointed a roué as governor.’ ” Mughayrah ibn Shu‘bah was among the attendants and said, “O’, the Commander of the Faithful, the weak pious person is pious for himself and weak for you while the powerful roué is powerful for you and a roué for himself.” ‘Umar said, “You said the right thing. You are the powerful roué then go to them.”, and he appointed him as governor of Kufah, ‘Umar ibn Khattab by ‘Abdu’l-Karim al-Khatib, p. ۲۷۶. Concerning Mughayrah’s personality and characteristics, see Sharh Ibn Abi’l-Hadid, vol. ۲۰, pp. ۸-۱۰. Many similar examples can be found in ‘Umar’s time. One of the best examples is reinstating Mu‘awiyah as governor of Syria and ‘Amr ibn al-‘As as governor of Egypt, both of whom were criticized by ‘Umar and ‘Umar was angry because of their conducts. However, he did not depose them because of the same reason. Ibid., pp. ۲۷۲, ۲۷۷. An example of such a way of thinking can be found in the words of Hajjaj ibn Yusuf. See Aghrad as-Siyasah fi I‘rad ar-Riyasah by ‘Ali ibn Muhammad Samarqandi, p. ۲۸۵, and also in Tabaqat al-Hanabilah, vol. ۲, p. ۳۶. It will be too lengthy to provide the full explanation of this last point and the jurisprudential, theological and historical roots as well as its results and consequences in the next periods and in the contemporary times and its basic role in shaping the Sunni religious structure and the religious psychology of the scholars and regular people. We only intend to mention the very important and at the same time fine and sensitive points that create a large difference between the Shi‘ite and Sunni religious structures and religious psychology as well as in their social and political developments. This difference can still be seen despite the great and fundamental developments of the recent decades. The difference will be more distinguishable with the future reduction in seeking political developments in Sunni territories, which will in any case take place for various .reasons. Gibb, Studies on the Civilization of Islam, pp. ۱۴۱-۶۶

otherwise, and also what the change was, why it occurred and what was its end .result

This is one of the most sensitive points where the Shi‘ite understanding and the Sunni understanding of Islam, politics, imamate and government differ strongly. The

understanding by the two of the religious and worldly attributes of Islam is not different. Both believe that the worldly laws of Islam constitute part of Islam and that one has to believe in and be committed to them. Both equally believe in the necessity of Islamic government, indeed according to the relevant conditions, and they do not think much differently on the details. Their basic difference is in their view of the ruler rather than the government. According to Sunnis, the ruler is a category that is practically separate from the theory of government and all that relates to it. In the Shi'ite view, these two are absolutely interdependent and correlated.(١)

In order to clarify this point, we have to take a look at the view of the two about imamate and guardianship. There, the question is not who is the Prophet's (S) imam and guardian. The problem does not begin there. According to Shi'ism, the problem is not basically that of the imam or guardian. The problem is the imamate and guardianship. The problem is not the person, it is the position. The problem is what position the imamate and guardianship have and, according to them, who can be the imam or guardian. In their view, the imam and

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١- Concerning the theory of the government and the characteristics of the governor and the relation of these two in the Sunni opinion, see Min Usul al-Fikr as-Siyasi al-Islami, pp. ٣۵٩-٨٩, and also Nizam al-Islam, especially pp. ١١-۵٠, Khasa'is at-Tashri' al-Islami fi's-Siyasah wa'l-Hkm by Fathi al-Durayni, pp. ٢۶٣-٣١٩.

caliph is one who has the qualifications for such a position. First the position is defined and delimited and then the qualified person is specified.(١)

This requires further explanation although this may lead us astray from the main discussion. However, there is no way but to further talk about it in order to clarify that which is of the utmost importance for a better understanding of this discussion.

The Shi'ite View

What Shi'ites say concerning the Prophet's (S) guardianship and caliphate is not that

the Prophet (S) appointed ‘Ali (‘a) as his successor and repeatedly emphasized it. More important than that is that basically their understanding of the issue is of special depth and extensiveness and has special attributes. In other words, the talk is not about the person and who should succeed the Prophet (S). Rather, it is mainly what the concept of the Prophet’s (S) succession is and what dimensions and attributes it has. Also, according to all of the dimensions and attributes, who can and must be .appointed to this position

The fact is that Shi‘ites, because of numerous logical and historical reasons, attach special importance to the caliphate and guardianship after the Prophet (S) and believe that it is far more important, more sensitive and more critical than political leadership in its common sense. As the leader of the Muslims, the Prophet (S) was not an ordinary leader who just had power. As a result, his successor in the position of leadership cannot be an ordinary person who just had the responsibility

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Concerning the Shi‘ite views of imamate and imam, see one of Imam ‘Ali’s (‘a) - ۱ .sermons on the subject. Sharh Ibn Abi’l-Hadid, vol. ۸, p. ۲۶۳

of politically leading the people. This is, in the first place, due to the unique .characteristics of Islam

As we said, Islam is a religion which is both a religion and a government; faith as well as politics and government. The two are connected to, dependent on and integral to each other. The Prophet’s (S) way of leadership in Medina is the best example for this. As the political leader of the society in Medina, the Prophet (S) sought to lead the society according to the teachings and orders of the Qur’an. The issue was administering the society according to the precepts of Islam rather than merely administering the people. The principle was to run the people’s affairs justly and to make the laws of Islam rule over all individual and social aspects of the people’s life. This is possible if the leader of the society has moral and spiritual merits accompanied by science and insight in religious affairs. The Prophet (S) was the best and the most

.perfect application of such characteristics

The problem is who can and must succeed such leadership, who can both administer the society and seek to realize the Islamic orders in all individual and collective aspects of the people's lives. In clearer terms, he has to have the power to administer the society within the principles and laws of Islam and without violating the same. If someone is only in charge of the political affairs of the society, does this mean that he has even the

?minimum qualifications

If we accept that the Prophet (S) was worthier than a political leader in leading the people, his successor has to have qualifications and a position higher than that of a political leader. If we accept that the administration of the society according to the laws of Islam and of the Qur'an is a duty, then in all times and not just in the time of the Prophet (S), the Prophet's (S) successor has to have the scholastic power and religious insight for carrying out such a duty. Finally, if we accept that the leader of the Islamic society that seeks to realize the orders and ideals of Islam has to have certain characteristics of spirituality and piety and be a manifestation of virtues that he seeks to realize, then certainly this principle is truer about the one who must take power .(after the Prophet (S

Therefore, caliphate and guardianship of the Prophet or, in other words, the principle of imamate is of special importance to Shi'ites. More than being about the successor and who he should be, the problem is about the subject, dimensions and concept of .succession and whether one can or has to be in such a position

It is true that the Shi'ite belief about Imam 'Ali's ('a) immediate caliphate is, in the first place, due to the explicit and repeated orders and emphases of the Prophet (S) regarding his succession, it should also be added that, since 'Ali ('a) has to be the immediate caliph after

the Prophet (S) because he, more than anyone else has the qualifications and characteristics that are required for such a position. According to Shi'ites, the reason why the Prophet (S) appointed 'Ali ('a) as his successor was his unique characteristics, that made him worthier than anyone else for that position. Such merits and qualifications made him worthy of the position. The Prophet's selection and .recommendations were a practical approval of this fact

In brief, according to Shi'ism, imamate and caliphate, before being about an individual, is about the position. First the position is defined and delimited and then the person to be in the position. An imam is one who has the qualifications needed for being in the position of imamate. It is not that there is a merit to imamate or caliphate, whose meaning is perceived in the light of the characteristics that the imams or (caliphs had.(۱

However, according to Sunnism, it is the other way round. First, the person is determined and the position is defined according to his characteristics. First, the guardian and caliph are determined and then guardianship and caliphate are defined. Their view of the ruler is affected by this principle. They recognize what occurred and .then define and delimit the conditions, characteristics and powers of the ruler

According to what was said, it can briefly be said that, "The Shi'ite and Sunni views of the government and politics and, in general, the non-worship laws of Islam, since they return to the same sources, are more or

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۱- For example, see Al-Ahkam as-Sultaniyyah, Abu Ya'la, pp. ۱۹-۲۵, part of which says, "Caliphate is attained with force and domination and allegiance is not needed." "One wins with the power of the sword and calls himself the Commander of the Faithful, then one who believes in God and in the Day of Judgment shall not disobey him and refuse to consider him as imam, no matter if he is good or bad." Then he adds, "The prayer leading belongs to one who wins domination." And quotes Ibn 'Umar, who, in

the horrible episode of Harrah—which in Yazid's time resulted in the slaughter of the people and Followers and sexual violations—said his prayers behind the governors and, in response to the objectors, said, "We are with the victor." Ibid., p. ۲۳. A better and clearer example can be found in the words of Ibn Hanbal; Al-A'immah al-Arba'ah, .vol. ۴, pp. ۱۱۹-۲۰

less similar. If there are differences, they are in details rather than in the principles, and it relates to their criteria in criticizing and studying the tradition since the two have different criteria in verifying the validity of sayings attributed to the Prophet. However, the views of the two concerning the ruler and his characteristics are very different. The Sunni view in this regard is recognizing the rulers that had the power in the previous centuries. Such recognition, through time, shaped and improved their jurisprudential and theological foundations in this respect. However, Shi'ites view the problem essentially different. Their view of the ruler arises from their view of the principle of ruling as it was in the hands of the Prophet (S) and then was or had to be transferred to his successors. According to them, this ruling is one of the characteristics of prophethood and the Prophet's mission. Since imamate and guardianship are somehow the continuation of prophethood and are in a position equal to that, the same type of ruling is applied. This continuation does not contradict the end of prophethood in Islam, which is a principle of Islam. It is exactly from this point that their thought about the ruler and his conditions, characteristics and powers is shaped and developed. From such an angle, what occurred in the early centuries lacked legality and, naturally, cannot be a criterion for discovering the rules and .conditions that are to be taken into account in determining the ruler's qualifications

It would

be appropriate to mention the Rebels here. Contrary to Sunnis and because of psychological, tribal and social reasons, they denied the status quo and then organized their view about the ruler and his qualifications based on such denial. The denial of the status quo by Shi'ites had ideological reasons while the ideology of the

.Rebels was born out of the status quo

Nevertheless, the discussion was that the view of Sunnis concerning the ruler was not that relevant to their view of the government. Their thought about the government and that the society has to be run according to the precepts and laws of Islam was affected by the Qur'an and the tradition while it was affected by historical facts .regarding the ruler and his characteristics

Two Views

The beginning of this dualistic attitude towards this problem goes back to before the Prophet's (S) death, after which, nobody doubted that the religious precepts had to govern the society. It was known and agreed on according to which laws and rules the society had to be run. However, concerning the ruler that had to be selected as caliph, the issue was not so clear. What was important and practically existed was that the society had to be run and an individual had to be selected to that position. When Abu Bakr was selected as caliph, he received general allegiance not because he had a certain characteristic or qualification that they had defined for the ruler. According to them, the issue was far more practical and

urgent or rather regular than such reflections or controversies. A number swore .allegiance to him and the others followed them without delay

Abu Bakr's caliphate and rule was accepted as a reality. If the people had pledged allegiance to someone else, his caliphate and rule would have been accepted as a reality. What established the caliphate for the first caliph was that a number pledged allegiance and the others said that they would follow the former. It is interesting that, in response to the repeated calls by Fatimah Zahra ('a), who asked them not to forget the Prophet's (S) recommendations and to administer the truth through the right path, they said, "You should have taken action sooner. We have pledged our allegiance, the issue is settled. If you had come to us earlier, we might have pledged allegiance to (you."(۱

Now let's see what the final result was. The Prophet (S) has a position of his own as the ruler and sovereign. The position as the religious legislator, the policy-maker and the political leader was accepted by all, and this was a religious acceptance. After the Prophet, the power was put in the hands of Abu Bakr. The people of that time did not attach any religious respect to him either before or after his caliphate. In their opinion, he was a person like the other Immigrants and Helpers. However, the important point is that, allegiance to him prepared the ground for a thought that was later established as a principle of

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۱ - Al-Imamah wa's-Siyasah, vol. ۱, p. ۱۲. Anothr example is the words of Bashir ibn Sa'd Ansari, who after hearing 'Ali's ('a) speech on the Prophet's (S) family to the effect that they were worthier of caliphate, said, "O' 'Ali, if the Helpers had heard this before pledging allegiance to Abu Bakr, they would have never disagreed with you." Ibid., p. ۱۲. "If the caliph becomes corrupt, he will not be deposed. Hanafite jurisprudents have adopted this opinion. Justice is not a qualification for one to become caliph. A corrupt person can be caliph although this is not desirable." 'Abdu'l-Karim al-Buka' says, "I saw ten of the Prophet's Companions, all of whom said prayers while standing behind unjust imams.", Ma'alim al-Khilafah al-Islamiyyah, pp. ۳۰۶-۷.

Sunni thought concerning the ruler and his qualifications. This requires further explanation.

The first people who pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr were very small in number. It was mainly their allegiance that stimulated the others to swear allegiance, i.e. the others said, "We will swear allegiance because they did, and this means accepting the reality.", which means recognizing him since recognizing him was a reality.

Although the story was not so tangible concerning the second and the third caliphs, the truth of the matter about them was like this as well. Abu Bakr appointed 'Umar, i.e. recognized his caliphate and succession, and the others followed him. 'Abdu'r-

Rahman ibn ‘Awf, on behalf of the six-man council, recognized ‘Uthman, and the people accepted this. However, the story of ‘Ali’s (‘a) selection as caliph was different. It was the large masses of the people who swore allegiance to him with much .insistence

What is important in the meanwhile is that the seed of obeying the ruler because his rule is a reality was planted at the time of the Senior Caliphs. Although this seed sprouted later when the Umayyad took power, taking a meaning and dimensions far different than what it practically meant at the time of the Senior Caliphs. At this time, the religious and sacred aspects of this part of the history was extended and received wide acceptance and the more or less unanimously achieved religious acceptance of .it largely contributed to this

As we said, the final improvement of this way of thought occurred

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during the Umayyad period and the person of Mu‘awiyah had an essential share in this. After his power was established, he tried hard to make caliphate hereditary in his clan. This was unprecedented until that time. Despite some important opposition, he was the final victor and the caliphate became hereditary. From then on, transfer of power followed a mechanism that was beyond or rather independent of the will of the Muslims. The question was not what the people want and say or what the religious rules relating to the ruler were according to by which to appoint the caliph. This was the fact and it was very difficult and to some people of that time impossible to change it. They considered it very difficult and were not willing to do it because it required doing things they did not like and were not willing to do as it required a great deal of (distress and devotion.(۱

Thus, the reality won over beliefs, ideals and rules because the principle was accepting the reality although the reality that was later recognized was totally different from the one that had been initially accepted and the mechanism of appointing the caliph and the general qualifications for it and the limits of his powers were totally different from what existed at the time of the Senior Caliphs. As a result,

the ruler was acceptable and had to be obeyed solely on the grounds that he had the power, even if he did not have the least

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۱ - It is one of the best examples of explicit criticism of Imam Husayn by an uncommitted tyrant-serving scholar of his time and rather all times. Tuhaf al-'Uqul, pp. ۱۷۱-۲.

qualifications or he took power by force and violence or oppression and violated the limits of the shari'ah and became corrupt.(۱)

As an example, the well-known jurisprudent and judge, Ibn Jama'ah says, "The third way through which compulsory allegiance is made is the force of a powerful person. Then, if a time is void of a qualified imam to take the position and a powerful person establishes his control over the people by using force and military force and without the people's allegiance or without being the successor to one to whom the people had pledged allegiance, he has to be obeyed... so that the Muslims' affairs are put in order and unified and ignorance and corruption will not impede this flow." He then adds, "If someone becomes the imam by means of force and then another person rises up and defeats the previous person, the previous person will be deposed and the new person will be the imam, which is according to what we said about the expedience of the Muslims and the need to maintain unity among them. It was because of this that Ibn 'Umar said on the episode of Harrah, 'We are with the one who wins.'"(۲)

Naturally, the ruling system was not indifferent in the meanwhile and it would not be logical for it to be so. Such a way of thinking was satisfactory and even ideal for it and it tried to support it by the Qur'an, sayings and stories, jurisprudence, history, theology and philosophy, and

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۱ - Min Usul al-Fikr as-Siyasi al-Islami, pp. ۴۳۸-۴۴.

۲ - Quoted from Al-Khilafah wa'l-Imamah by 'Abdu'l-Karim al-Khatib, pp. ۳۰۳.

it did so. Since it was in harmony with the spirit of the people and their historical and cultural background and the sociopolitical developments of their time, it was widely accepted. As further dealing with this and also how forgery and distortion were involved in the meantime would make us deviate from the main discussion, we give it up and suffice to make two points.(١)

Fatalism

Now we have to see what the problem was of those in power in those days. They wanted to make the people obey the ruler merely on the account that his power and rule were a reality. The Umayyad practically did not want anything more than this. As we have already mentioned, they were not so willing to be given a religious stature. They neither required it nor liked it. Even if they made use of religious motivations, it was to reinforce their worldly power not to consolidate their religious position as the caliph of the Muslims—quite contrary to the ‘Abbasid caliphs, who were willing to define themselves a religious position and stature, in whose light to consolidate their worldly power.(٢)

What factor could be put at the service of such a goal and to make the people obey them unconditionally? Considering the psychological, cultural and historical backgrounds, the best means was to resort to fatalism. The pre-Islamic Arabs had an unalterable belief in fate. They believed that the human life and fate are beyond his will and control and that the ups and downs of life

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١- Al-Islam wa Usul al-Hukm well analyzes this story, especially pp. ١۶٨-٨٢.

٢- Goldziher well explains the effects of the actions of the ‘Abbasids in forming the jurisprudential and theological and traditional structures of Muslims and in consolidating their position. Goldziher, Muslim Studies, vol. ٢, pp. ٧۵-٧.

are due to predetermined causes, in which human beings have no role.

As was common among the Bedouins, this thought was perfectly accepted among the

people of Mecca and the Quraysh. Basically, their idolatry can be comprehended and analyzed in such a relationship. Therefore, they believed in various deities and they made sacrifices to them while believing that they had a role in their lives. Any event that occurred from their birth time to their death, be it the birth of a boy or girl, drought, trade and profit, victory or defeat in war, disabling diseases or poverty, they considered to be the direct result of the same deity while they did not define any role (for human decision in this regard.(١

Principally, dualism, polytheism and belief in various deities and idols are contradictory to the belief in human freedom and responsibility. Human freedom would not make sense in a world in which the fates of any part of it is controlled by an independent metaphysical force. Man can be said to be free if he is the architect of his own fate, at least to a certain extent. Otherwise, if the fates and events of one's life .are controlled by independent deities, it will not make sense to talk about freedom

Nevertheless, fatalism and determinism were the prevailing thought in the pre-Islamic Arabian society, which was strongly criticized by the Qur'an as it resulted in internal human deterioration. The criticisms followed several goals. Firstly, they ,sought to eliminate this unrealistic untrue thought

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١- Concerning the concept of causality and principally the rational life of Arabs, see .Fajr al-Islam, pp. ٣٠-۴٩

which was a foolish delusion of the pre-Islamic Arabs thinking of the world as having several deities. Secondly, they thought to revive the human conscience and the personal sense of responsibility in individuals who did not think of themselves as having any will. On the same basis, they would submit to any mean or evil act and, as opposed to their internal pressures, they approached the fictitious gods to attain .salvation rather than by reforming their selves

When one's happiness or misery is not controlled by his own actions and are referred only to the will of the gods and goddesses, naturally no one will try to reform himself

in order to achieve happiness and everyone will resort to the same idols or, in their own words, interceders. Finally, the criticisms sought to collapse the doctrinal and intellectual foundations of the superiority of the chosen nobility which was ruthless, materialistic and evil. In the ignorant pre-Islamic society of those days, what consolidated the ruling nobility was not the power of the sword. It was, rather, the .deterministic superstitions

The society of Arabia then was too tribal and dispersed to be made obedient by the force of the sword. The stature and position of the corrupt ruthless powerful people of that time arose from the people's ignorance and dogmatism rather than their weakness or inability. It was exactly because of this that they were the most revengeful enemies of the Prophet (S) to the last moment and would not bow to

the Prophet. When they converted to Islam because of fear or greed, they constantly .sought to take revenge and, finally, they did so under the protection of the Umayyad

The fact is that perceiving and accepting monotheism, in the sense that it is understood in divine religions, especially Islam, although it is an inherent and conscientious ability, requires a minimum of intellectual and rational growth. One who is incapable of this cannot simply accept and comprehend that everything is controlled by God and that, what man considers to be the effective factors, are all the material and non-material means and tools of this great world, which were entirely created by God and obey Him. It is to be said that the ignorant pre-Islamic Arabs lacked such intellectual and rational abilities. Their biological, social, historical and cultural backgrounds were distant from the developments that would entail such .growth

As we have said, they did not even have a clear understanding of the concept of causality although they were perhaps familiar with it yet were unable to discover the relations between different factors. This was because of the absolute commonality of the superstitions and fortunetelling among them at the most obtuse level. Indeed, any tribe and nation has superstitions of its own but what was common among the pre-

Islamic Arabs was more than superstitions. More than being due to factors that would result in seeking and loving superstitions, which was generally due to idiocy, lunacy and not using the rational forces rather than the

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suppressed or unsuppressed spiritual and psychological needs. It would be appropriate here to quote part of the precise description of Ahmad Amin on "the intellectual life of the pre-Islamic Arabs."

"The pre-Islamic Arabs were not able to establish a proper relationship between cause and effect. If somebody was sick and in pain, they would consider it to be incurable. Although they somehow knew there was a relationship between the illness and the drug, the relationship was not clear to them. They just knew that the tribal habit was to use such a drug for such pain. That was the most of their understanding. Therefore, it would not be strange for them to believe that the chief's blood would cure a dog or that the cause of a human disease is an evil spirit that has entered his body and the spirit has to be rejected in order to cure the person. When they feared that somebody might go mad, they would apply the waste matters and bones of a dead body on him. There are many such examples. None of these things, so long as the tribal chief did them, were questioned or denied because people refuse to do such things if they are really looking for the causes of the diseases while the pre-Islamic Arabs had not yet attained such a level of development."

"The same inability to have a causative understanding of affairs accounts for the absolute commonality of superstitions and myths among the pre-Islamic Arabs and the reason literary

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books are full of such myths and superstitions... This was why they resorted to fortunetelling in order to study the events of the past and of the future."

"It is true that in any tribe or society, however civilized and developed they might be,

there are people who believe in superstitions, but Arab literary books indicate that such beliefs were believed by the people in general rather than by certain individuals, and that fortunetelling and the like have been recognized by all the tribes of that time although, in a couplet of pre-Islamic Arab poetry, an example of astral discussions or a story with high thoughts indicating the causative relations might be found. However, even in these cases, one cannot find deep thought or a clear analysis."(١)

Amin quotes a story from Sirah by Ibn Hisham, "One of the tribes of Thaqif were terrified by the fall of the stars—i.e. meteors. They went to a person in their tribe who was known as 'Amru ibn Umayyah, who was from Bani 'Alaj. He was the most clever and deep-thinking of the Arabs. They told him, 'O' 'Amru, did you not see what happened in the sky because of the fall of the stars?' He said, 'I did.', and then added, 'If those of the stars fell with whose help the people find the directions on land and in the sea and the seasons of summer and winter are identified by them and the people's lives depend on them, I swear by God that

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١- Fajr al-Islam, p. ٣٩.

it means the end of the world and the destruction of the creatures. If stars other than these fell and the former remained in place, it means a fate that God has determined for the creatures. Which of them fell?'"(١)

The strange thing is that such things are still believed by some Arabs today, indeed by those who have maintained and been brought up according to their old heritage. They still breathe and think in such atmospheres. A while ago, newspapers wrote that the great Mufti of Arabia, Sheikh 'Abd al-'Aziz ibn Baz has taken a devil out of an Arab and he converted him to Islam.(٢)

What is considerable among these is that the most reputable and influential cleric of a country or even of a religious branch, i.e. Wahhabism, which deems that it is the only branch whose Islam is pure and, like the original Islam, is beneficent and away from additions and superstitions and forged items, thinks like this in our time and takes

direct action to exorcise the devil and then calls it to Islam and the latter accepts it. More importantly, the newspapers of this country write it without the least doubt, while they so strongly believe in it and in their own beliefs they would not hesitate .even to mock and be harsh to others

Nevertheless, a proper sympathetic understanding of the intellectual and mental characteristics of pre-Islamic Arabs is of key importance in understanding this and many other discussions, we had better quote another part

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۱- .Ibid., quoted from Sirah ibn Hisham

۲- As-Sunnah an-Nabawiyyah bayn Ahli'l-'Iqd wa Ahli'l-Hadith, p. ۹۵. This book, wich is written by one of the greatest and best-known scholars, is one of the best examples showing the difference of perception in the interpretation of the writer and his fellow thinkers and supporters about Islam and the perception and interpretation of the early and Wahhabi scholars about this religion. The book is more important from this point of view than from the point of view of its contents. In addition, the author tells the story of his argument with one of the Sa'udi students about the prohibition or permission of music and about which types are prohibited while teaching at 'Abdu'l-'Aziz University in Mecca, "...then I told him seriously, 'Islam is not a climatic religion that belongs to you or so that you are the only people to understand or interpret it. You have strict limited Bedouin jurisprudence and when you put this jurisprudent and Islam in the same place and introduce them as inseparable, you will reduce the value of Islam and make the people run away from it. This is a great .injustice to the mission and way of Islam...'", pp. ۷۵-۶

.of Amin's description, although it would be a bit lengthy

World Knowledge of the Arabs in Old Times

An Arab's attitude towards the world is not general and all-inclusive, like that of a" Greek. In their first philosophical attempts, the Greeks looked at the world in a comprehensive and all-inclusive manner. They would ask, 'How did this world come to

existence? In my view, this world is a set of changes and developments. Is there a single stable basis beyond all this change and development? If there is, is it water, air or fire? My feeling is that all the components are interrelated like the components of a single object and that they follow fixed laws. What is the system and how was it ?formed and from what

A Greek would ask himself these and similar questions and this would form the basis of his philosophy, all of which was the result of his general outlook. However, an Arab, whether before or after Islam, would not look at the world in this way. He would look around himself and, if something caught his attention, he would run to it and he would be inspired by a great deal of poetry, wisdom and proverbs and would say something .in its description

He did not have a perfect inclusive outlook. He could not analyze its causes and effects. More importantly, when encountering an object, he would not see it in its entirety. For example, when he stood before a tree, he would not see it as a whole. He would pay attention to

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some of its components, like the straightness of the stem or the beauty of the branches. The entirety of a garden would not catch his attention and his mind would not take an image of it like a photograph taken by a camera. He was like a honeybee that flies from one flower to another and sucks some juice from any of them. These are the mental and rational characteristics of an Arab, which accounts for the defect (as well as the beauty of Arab literature, even during the Islamic period." (۱

Shahrestani puts this in another way, "There were few Arab philosophers and their philosophy consisted of sudden and self-motivated thoughts... The intellectual activities of Arabs and Indians were similar to each other. Their goal was to know the properties of objects and the dominating feature of their thought was essence and nature. The intellectual activities of Iranians and Romans were similar as well. Their goal was to study the quality of objects and the dominating feature of their thought was acquisition and attempt."(۲) After quoting this, Amin adds that many orientalists

such as Shahrestani thought that the Arab outlook on the world was not general and .inclusive and principally could not look at this world in that way

Naturally, fatalism would grow and progress in such an atmosphere. It is not necessary for anyone to contribute to its promotion. In such a background, chiefly no thought other than fatalistic thoughts had a chance to progress. The mentality and the psychological

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.Fajr al-Islam, pp. ۴۱-۲ -۱

.Ibid., p. ۴۳, quoted from Al-Milal wa'n-Nihal by Shahrestani -۲

structure of the people is such that bows to anything that is not supported by reason because there is practically no rational or analytical activity going on. This is because of the final victory of the Ash'arites, the Traditionists and the supporters of determinism and condemnation of reason. The problem, more than having political causes, had social, psychological, cultural and educational causes. They achieved victory at a time when the political rule had been weakened and dispersed. Their final victory was not acquired with the support of the ruling power, religious domination or propaganda. Ultimately, it was the determinist-thinking and determinist society, rather than the rulers promoting determinism, which defeated the supporters of .reason and freedom

At the same time, however, this does not mean that the pre-Islamic determinism had certain well-defined principles and existed as a philosophical and theological school, like the one we witness in the later centuries. It was public belief and had a wide influence, in a way that the psychological and doctrinal and even sociopolitical structure of the Arabs had been developed under its influence. It has to be added, indeed, that this belief and way of thinking was for a while overshadowed by the suspenseful as well as hopeful sociopolitical conditions of the days when Islam was taking power and its power was extending. However, when the world conquests of Islam were on the fall and the other tribes and nations were included within the new

,empire, the ground was prepared for its further appearance

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especially since the newly converted Muslims had much experience and well-developed systematized thoughts and beliefs in this respect, all of which coincided with the period of domination of Mu'awiyah. It is at this point that the story begins (seriously, as there was a ground for it.(۱

The situation was quiet and the conquests had ended. There also had been the heavy and difficult-to-accept experience of the time of 'Uthman and 'Ali and the clashes between the Muslims. Meanwhile, the Peoples of the Book and the various sects had found an opportunity to find their position in the new system in order to promote their beliefs. More importantly, when Mu'awiyah and the Umayyad took power, the best background was prepared for the reviving of the pre-Islamic Ignorant heritage as the Bedouin and their Ignorant nature was strongly sympathetic with the pre-Islamic period while they also needed it for continuing their domination and the mass of the (Arab people in that time liked and even loved it.(۲

Promoting Determinism

As if the ground was prepared, from every respect, for the reviving of the Ignorant heritage, especially for fatalism and determinism. It happened in practice. This conquering thought stepped forward and covered the entire society. This was indeed approved and supported by the ruling system. Even if there had not been the well-thought and systematic support of Mu'awiyah and the Umayyad, this thought would still have opened a place for itself considering the conditions of that period. However, when the support was added, it became dominant in

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۱- Concerning the strong effective influence of the Jewish and Christian clerics and especially those who converted to Islam, on the thoughts and beliefs of the early Muslims, see Al-Milal wa'n-Nihal, Subhani, pp. ۷۱-۹۶. Concerning Mu'awiyah's love of

mythology and his supporting its promotion, see Murawwij adh-Dhahab, vol. ٣, p. ٣٩. The fact is that the simplistic mind and culture of the early Arabs and the numerous questions that had been aroused in their minds with the coming of Islam and their contacts with the other tribes and nations, and their sensitive and inquiring nature along with the respect they had for the clerics of the Book People since the pre-Islamic Ignorance period, provided the ground in the best way for the influence of the clerics of the Book People on the Muslims. When Ibn Khaldun talks about analyses of the Qur'an, he cleverly mentions and emphasizes this point, which we quote here completely because of its importance, "A narrative analysis is documented with the works and stories quoted by the early scholars, consisting of studying the abrogating and the abrogated and the reasons for revelation and the purposes of the verses. In order to know all of these, there is no way other than quoting from the Companions and the Followers. The earlier people have gathered complete collections in this respect. However, their books and quotations consist of acceptable and unacceptable elements, since the Arab tribes were not People of the Books and knowledge. Rather, they had been overcome by Bedouin habits of illiteracy and, when they intended to learn about issues that are sought by human nature, such as the development of phenomena, the beginning of the creation and the mysteries of existence, they would ask those who had been People of the Books before them, which consisted of the believers in the Torah among the Jews and those of the Christians who followed their religion. The followers of the Torah lived among Arabs at that time and were Bedouins like them and were not aware of such subjects other than for what the People of the Books in general knew. Most followers of the Torah were Humayranis that had converted to Judaism who, when converting to Islam, had the same knowledge and dependence on religious orders which were not to be cautiously considered, such as the beginning of the creation and what related to predictions and the like. This group consisted of the Ka'b al-Ahbar, Wahab bin Munabbah, 'Abdullah bin Salam and their likes. Therefore, analyses for such purposes became full of the stories and quotations that they knew while these were not among the issues that related to the precepts so as to make enquiries as to reaching proofs for practicing them. And the analysts were negligent about them and filled analysis books with such stories while the roots of these, as we mentioned, are the Bedouin Torah followers, and what they quote is not

based on research and awareness. Nevertheless, the entire members of the group became well-known and attained a high rank both in the religion and in the Muslim nation. Therefore, their quotations were accepted in those days..." Ibn Khaldun, Introduction, Persian translation, vol. ٢, pp. ٨٩١-٢, and especially Goldziher, Muslim .Studies, vol. ٢, pp. ١٥٢-٩

For instance, when some of the Prophet's (S) Companions asked what do you talk -٢ about when you get together, they replied, "We read poems and recount stories of the pre-Islamic Ignorance period." Fajr al-Islam, p. ٩٥. This indicated now strongly the early Muslims liked their pre-Islamic Ignorance heritage. Many similar examples can .be provided

all aspects. Worse than anything else was that it was under the mask of the religion and the Qur'an, for which forgeries, distortions and new interpretations were applied on Islam and the Qur'an in order to give them an image that would approve the principle of determinism. The problem was not, anymore, whether the thought was approved by the Qur'an. More important than that was that they said Islam and the Qur'an were nothing other than that.(١)

Now we have to see what they wanted and why they propagated this thought so strongly. We have already mentioned that they required the people to be obedient and quiet. They wanted the people to follow them, not to criticize or object to them, not to say 'Why did you do this? Why did you do that?', not to say, 'Why are you oppressive? Why are you violating the religion?', not to say, 'Why do you violate God's limits? Why do you not punish the violators?', not to say, 'Why do you plunder the public treasury and spend it for your personal desires? Why do you not stop the recklessness of your governors?' They wanted to be absolute in what they did and to rule without any impediment. Their Bedouin Ignorant nature, wealth, unlimited facilities and power, limitless lechery, lack of capacity, mean personalities and the tendency to saturate themselves in all ways did not let them think other than about their whims and wishes. Those whose fathers would be more than satisfied by

To find examples in this regard, see Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Kitab as-Sunnah, p. ١۴٣. This -١ is an example, "'Amru ibn Muhammad recounts, 'I was with Salim bin 'Abdullah when a man came to ask, 'Is it fate to comit adultery?' He said, 'Yes.' The man asked, 'Will I be punished for it?' He threw him a grit.'", As-Sunnah, p. ١۴٣.

several camel loads and would envy such a thing were now on top of the greatest empire. Naturally, what they did and expected irrationally was quite expectable.(١)

How could the ruler, be it the caliph, his province governors or governors, rule freely? The religious precepts as well as the people who believed in the precepts would limit him. This could not be countered. The Islamic society was not the pre-Islamic ignorant society without laws or rules. Islam existed and they could not deny it explicitly because this would result in their own denial. They could ignore the laws but could not deny its principle.

The best solution, which would neither result in the denial of Islam nor impede their freedom, power and lechery, would be one that would encourage determinism and say that man is a forced being without a will that does not and cannot have a role in determining his destiny. The events of his life are controlled by God and what happens to the human being are from Him and his will. The same pre-Islamic deterministic thought was encouraged in an Islamic rendering, with the difference being that various deities were replaced by God.(٢)

According to this interpretation, what occurs to man is beyond his will and is from the absolute will of God Almighty, be it from the nature or from the ruler or caliph or other people. The important point is this last one, i.e. what is from the ruler is the same as God's decision which is

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In his various sermons, Imam 'Ali mentions the very hard biological and living -١ conditions of the Ignorant Arabs. For example, see Imam's sermon in which after the selection of 'Uthman, as quoted by Kanz al-'Ummal, vol. ۵, p. ٧١٨, he considers Arabs to be the poorest people in terms of living conditions and the way they dressed. Also

.see another sermon of the Imam, in which he points this out; Al-Gharat, ۱, p. ۳۰۲

۲ - The religion of determinism was formed in the time of Mu'awiyah and caliphs of Bani Marwan. Bab Dhikr al-Mu'tazilah on determinism of the Umayyads and their .poetry, see Al-Umawiyyun wa'l-Khilafah, pp. ۲۷-۴۷

realized through the ruler and, therefore, is unchangeable and unobjectionable. Also the very existence of the ruler is a God's decision and cannot be changed. He exists because God wants him to exist, and he has power because God wants him to have power.(۱)

For example, consider these words of Mansur, the second 'Abbasid caliph, addressed to the people in one of his trips to Mecca, "O', people! I am God's sultan on the earth. I rule you with His help, approval and inspiration. I am his treasurer and act based on what He wants and distribute with his permission. God has given me the lock to his treasury. He will open it to you when He so wishes and will lock it when He wishes to lock it. So, go to God and on this day that he will bestow on you what he told in his book and ask for it, about which He said, "Now I completed my religion on you and perfected my blessing on you and chose Islam as your religion." Ask him to aid me on the right path and inspire me to be kind and good to you and open me to give away to you your portions fairly."(۲)

Another example is what Mu'awiyah said. The book Aghrad as-Siyasah fi I'rad ar-Riasah, which is full of such examples, thus quotes him, "We kings are like the time. He whose hand we get will rise and he whom we put below will be inferior." Then,

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۱ - One of the best people to describe this movement is 'Abdu'r-Razzaq, "The Muslims in general and the Islamic clerics generally believe that the caliph gets his government and power from God. In the following phrases, you will see that they have defined the caliph as God's shadow and Mansur thinks that he was God's sultan on the earth. This theory was expressed by clerics and poets since the early centuries. They believed that it is constantly God who selects the caliph and gives him

caliphate... so much so that they sometimes put the caliph in a position along God's or close to His, like the poet of this poem, 'What you want rather than what the fate wants will happen. Rule as if you are the only almighty...'", Al-Islam wa Usul al-Hukm, pp. ١١٧-٨. Also pp. ١١٣-٢٠, especially see the very good argument of Hasan Hanafi in this respect in Min al-'Aqidah ila'th-Thawrah, vol. ١, pp. ٢١-٩.

٢- 'Uyun al-Akhbar, vol. ٢, p. ٢٤٧.

the author, as an explanation and approval of Mu'awiyah's words, says, "These words indicate his high character and the ultimate point of his nobility while being a king under God's approval. In fact, kings are God's substitutes and caliphs and their orders on the people's property will be effective. One who wants to get to a noble rank has to see it as a duty to obey the king."(١)

In Nazariyyat al-Imamah, Mahmud Subhi thus explains Mu'awiyah's policy, "In order to consolidate the columns of his government he merely use force and material power. He also made use of the religious beliefs. He told the people that there had been a difference between him and 'Ali as to caliphate. Therefore, they left it to God to decide and God chose him before 'Ali and selected him as caliph. In the same manner, when he wanted to make the people of Hijaz pledge alleiance to his son, Yazid, he told them that his selection as caliph is a predetermined decision of God and the people have no choice in it. It was thus nearly settled in the Muslims' minds that whatever the caliph wants and orders, even if it contradicts God's orders, is a predetermined decision of God and He has decided to make it happen to his people.

During his emirate at the time of 'Uthman, Mu'awiyah explicitly said that the assets at the public treasury belonged to God rather than to Muslims. He meant to keep them for himself. In a

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١- Aghrad as-Siyasah fi I'rad ar-Riyasah, p. ٢٧١.

like manner, he made use of the ideology of divine determination and the religious right of the kings in order to found and consolidate his rule. This was the worst change

possible in the religious policy of Muslims because he wanted to exploit the religion for his power and to make the believers follow the ruler's whims."(1)

Mu'awiyah's propaganda and that of his successors succeeded for numerous reasons, many of which had social, mental and historical backgrounds and were rooted in the psychological structure of the people of that time and not merely to his actions and propaganda. The people saw and evaluated the issues and currents the same way that he and his likes wanted. An example of such a way of thinking can be seen in the theory that Hasan Basri told Hajjaj ibn Yusuf. Interestingly, he was more liberal and bolder than his contemporary jurisprudents and sayings scholars>, so much so that the Mu'tazilites consider him one of their own because he rose up against the deterministic thought of his time. In this respect, he has made some correspondence with 'Abdu'l-Malik and Hajjaj himself, in which he rejects their invoking some verses of the Qur'an to prove their deterministic theory.(2)

He is even one who criticized Mu'awiyah on various occasions because of what he did.(3) However, despite all these, he prevented the people from fighting against Hajjaj, who committed any crime, saying, "Do not fight him because he is God's punishment. Therefore, you cannot turn away God's punishment with

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1- Nazariyyat al-Imamah, p. ۳۳۴.

2- Concerning that the Mu'tazilites consider Hasan Basri as one of their own, see Ahmad bin Yahya bin Murtada, Bab Dhikr al-Mu'tazilah, pp. ۱۲-۱۵. Concerning his letters to 'Abdu'l-Malik and Hajjaj, see Ibid., pp. ۱۲-۱۴, and also Al-Umawiyyun wa'l-Khilafah, p. ۳۶.

3- Concerning Hasan Basri's critique of Mu'awiyah, see Tabaqat by ibn Sa'd, ۱, p. ۱۱۹.

your swords. If he is God's calamity, then be patient to such calamity so that God will rule between you and him because God is the best ruler."(1) This was while he considered Hajjaj to be the worst of God's people and said about him, "If any nation brings forth the worst and the most evil of them and we take forth Hajjaj, we will be

(the winner in such a competition."(٢)

Historical Examples

It would be appropriate to mention some examples here. After the bloody episode of 'Ashura, when Imam Husayn's family was taken to Ibn Ziyad as captives, there were exchanges of words between Ibn Ziyad and Zaynab and Imam Zayn al-'Abidin, which are considerable in respect of this discussion. Ibn Ziyad pointed to Imam Zayn al-'Abidin, and asking who he was. They said he was 'Ali ibn al-Husayn. "Was it not 'Ali ibn al-Husyan whom God killed." Imam Zayn al-'Abidin said, "I had a brother who was also named 'Ali ibn al-Husayn, whom the army killed". Ibn Ziyad said, "Rather say God killed him." The Imam read the verse "God kills the people when their time comes." Ibn Ziyad was angry and said, "Do you dare respond to and deny me? Behead him." (Indeed, things happened and the order was not performed.(٣)

A similar discussion took place in Yazid's court. Yazid addressed the Imam, saying, "Praise to God who killed your father." Imam said, "God's curse on him who killed my father." Hearing this, Yazid ordered his death, but this was

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١- For his discouraging the people from fighting Hajjaj and his argument, see Ash-Shi'ah wa'l-Ḥakimun, p. ٢۶.

٢- Concerning his description of Hajjaj, see Al-A'immah al-Arba'ah, ١, p. ٢۵٧.

٣- The elaborate account of the story can be found in 'Abdu'r-Razzaq Muqrim, Maqtal al-Husayn, pp. ۴٢٢-٣, and Muntahi al-Amal, lithography, vol. ١, p. ٣۶٢.

not performed. After a short time, he ordered that Imam be taken to him. He began cutting the chain that was on Imam's neck, while reading this verse, "The troubles that the people have are because of the wrong things they do while God forgives many of them." The Imam said, "You are wrong to think this verse is about us. What is about us is that, 'The calamity will affect you, whether calamities to you or your soul or the things that happen to you from outside, unless they are written in the heavenly scripture. Do not regret and do not be happy for what has happened to you.'" (١)

Is it not true that the only thing the two wanted to say was that what happened to Imam Husyan and his companions was done by God rather than by the ruler and that the ruler was only a means for the realization of God’s will? That is to say, it was not Yazid or Ibn Ziyad or their army who killed Imam Husyan but it was God who killed them. And why did God do so? It was the result of their own actions and they deserved such punishment. Here this was important for fully acquitting the ruler, as if .no responsibility was to be attached to him and all returned to God

The ruler would thus have unlimited power and immunity because all his actions were the manifestation of God’s will and, therefore, could not be changed or objected

p: ۲۰۴

The elaborate account of the story can be found in Maqtal al-Husain, p. ۴۵۲, and - ۱ .Muntahi al-Amal, vol. ۱, p. ۳۵۷

to. This was the Umayyad interpretation because they neither had to deny the principle of the religion nor failure to make such denial would limit them. They wanted power and unlimited freedom in action rather than religious justification or the like. All .this was obtained in the light of such interpretation

The Umayyad principally thought, lived, ruled and made propaganda on such basis. Their caliphate is full of such examples. When Mu‘awiyah died, Yazid wrote to the governor of Medina, “Mu‘awiyah was one of God’s people. God dignified him and made him His successor and entrusted the people’s affairs to him and gave him power and mastery.”(۱) Similarly, in response to those who objected to the crown princedom of his son, Yazid, Mu‘awiyah said, “This kingdom and sultanate is God’s and He will give it to anyone He wants. God has chosen Yazid as crown prince and you are (not in a position to object to it. No one has power over it.”(۲

Their governors would talk and make propaganda in a like manner. One day, Ibn Ziyad said to the people, “O’ people, we are your chiefs and it is us who protect you from affliction. We rule with the power that God has given us and we give you from the things He has bestowed on us while we will treat you fairly. Then try to obey,

cooperate with and give advice to us so as to deserve our justice."(٣) A more ,developed example of such a way of thinking

p: ٢٠٥

.Al-Imamah wa's-Siyasah, vol. ١, p. ٢٠٣ -١

.Ibid., vol. ١, p. ١٩١ -٢

.Tarikh-e Tabari, ٥, p. ٢٢٠ -٣

to which many elements of the Qur'an and sayings are attached, can be found in the (elaborate will of Yazid ibn 'Abdu'l-Malik for the crown princedom of his two sons.(١

Forging Sayings of the Tradition

Based on such a way of thinking, a great deal of sayings were forged to the effect that what is done by the ruler is the same as God's wish. "Let the ruler do what he wants because, if he does good deed, he will be awarded and you shall be grateful and, if he does bad deed, he will be responsible for his own sins and you shall be patient. If the ruler does a religiously undesirable thing to you, be patient towards him and do not violate your allegiance to him because one who does this will die as if he died before Islam." They went so far as to claim that the Prophet (S) had said, "There will be rulers who will not follow my directions and my method and will have a devil's heart in a human body." "What should we do towards them?", the Prophet was asked. "Listen to and obey his orders even if he lashes you and takes your belongings.", said the Prophet (S). Finally, they said that the Prophet said, "Obey any emir as obeying him will be like obeying me." As an example, refer to the chapter "Kitab Al-Imarah", of the book Kanz al-'Ummal. Interestingly, most sayings quoted in this respect contain (similar points.(٢

As we said, the main motivation of forging such

p: ٢٠٦

.Al-Umawiyyun wa'l-Khilafah, pp. ٢۶-٨ -١

.Kanz al-‘Ummal, ۶, pp. ۴-۸۹ -۲

sayings was the deterministic thought and the thought that the ruler himself and his actions are the actions of God. However, those in power were apparently not satisfied and did not think of it as sufficient for stabilizing their position. Therefore, they forged many sayings to the effect that breaking one’s allegiance in any form was religiously prohibited. If somebody has not pledged allegiance to an emir, he will die as if before Islam. “Pray behind any emir, good or bad, just or roué, and follow his orders. Do not say a bad thing about them, as cursing them is cursing me. If they delay saying the prayer, follow them without objection. Never think of standing up against the ruler as one who does this has abandoned the religion. Behead the one who stands up against the ruler. Kill the one who violates the Muslims’ customs. It behooves you to obey the emir in any situation, whether you are satisfied or have reservations for doing so. Do not fight them for power. The tribe who wishes to weaken the sultan will be weakened by God in this world. One who calls the people to himself while there is an emir, may God, his angels and his people curse him and you shall kill such a person.(۱)

This was the story of the deterministic propaganda of the Umayyad. They wanted to put the ruler in a position that was not harmed by criticisms. The fact is that they succeeded in doing so.

.Ibid., pp. ۳۹-۴۷ -۱

They worked so hard and invested so much to this end that it was later said that, “It is the Umayyad who support and promote determinism and the Alavites who claim and promote justice and monotheism.” The Infallible Imams stood, as much as they could, against the blind crippling and stagnating determinism and fought it. However, because of the reasons that were mentioned, this thought opened a position for itself and had a share in forming the Sunni thought about the ruler. Indeed, this does not mean that Sunnis later accepted their deterministic interpretation. Yet, this is true to a certain extent, but the point was that their attitude towards the ruler grew and was

(accepted under the effect of such thought.(1)

Although this series of sayings was not directly related to the subject of determinism that was promoted and supported by the Umayyad, it was a consequence thereof and for reinforcing and strengthening it. Sayings to the effect that the divine will was carried out through the ruler's commands and actions actually put the ruler in an invulnerable and un-criticizable position without the need to assume a religious position for him. Sayings to the effect that it was necessary to obey the ruler and prohibited to break allegiance with and rise up against him in fact served the same .un-criticizable position

The great Sunni jurisprudents, sayings scholars and theologians viewed the ruler from this same point of view and defined and evaluated the necessity of obeying him and the prohibition of

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۱- In the Umayyad period, other than through the Infallible Imams and the Shi'ites, there was scattered opposition to the blind crippling determinism of those days, generally by independent freethinkers who opposed the ruling system ideologically because of intellectual, political and religious reasons. Ghaylan Damashqi, who, along with two of his fellow thinkers, was later killed by Hisham, is among such people. For more examples, especially see Bab Dhikr al-Mu'tazilah, pp. ۵-۲۳. "Ghaylan criticized the Umayyad very much because he did not accept their view of the caliphate. He stood against their oppression and opposed them openly because of their opposition to the Book and the Tradition. He would talk about their appointing corrupt people in top positions and their agents treating the people unjustly. It is well known that Hisham ordered his murder and he was cut to bits because he had not accepted that Hisham was God's caliph and had resisted his possession of the Muslims' properties, calling the people of Armenia to make a revolution against him"; Al-Umawiyyun wa'l-Khilafah, p. ۱۷۶. Concerning Ghaylan and his personality, thoughts, actions and end, see Al-Milal wa'n-Nihal, p. ۱۲۷, especially Bab Dhikr al-Mu'tazilah, pp. ۱۵-۱۷, which provides an account of his brave protest to the lavish spendings by the Umayyads,

“He asked ‘Umar ibn ‘Abdu’l-‘Aziz to put him in charge of selling the treasury to compensate for any injustice, and he did so. He put the wealth in anauction, including a pair of furry socks worth ٣٠,٠٠٠ dirhms. He shouted, “Who is there to say these are the imams for guiding while, with this much wealth, people still starve to death?”, Ibid., p. ١۶. Interestingly, Ghaylan was subject of much attention in his own time as well. It is well-known that Hasan Basri, when seeing him during a hajj ceremony, said about him, “Do you see this person? I swear by God he is the sign of God for you the people .of Syria.” Bab Dhikr al-Mu‘tazilah, p. ١۵

opposing him and the limits of his powers on the same basis. The gist of their argument was that the ruler per se without considering who he is and how he took power and what he believed in and how he acts was legal and had to be obeyed because his presence and power was a reality and this is God’s wish as He realized it (as a fact.(١)

Although there have been people among the outstanding jurisprudents, theologians and scholars whose views of the ruler was not so, i.e., for example, they defined certain conditions for him such as practicing the religion and justice, being brave, knowledge of politics, tactfulness, being from the Quraysh tribe and even ijtihad (religious expertise). However, firstly they were a minority and, secondly, they disappeared through time and their thought was consequently forgotten, as the Mu‘tazilites faded away and their thoughts and beliefs were overshadowed by the dogmatic beliefs of the Ash‘arites and their predecessors. This group of jurisprudents and theologians, like their fellow liberal thinkers, i.e. the Mu‘tazilites, shone for a while in the first centuries and in the flourishing period of rationalism of the Islamic civilization and then faded away for ever. The important thing is that their thoughts did not receive any attention either in their own time or in the following periods, and did not change into an independent jurisprudential and theological or possibly sociopolitical current and did not penetrate the structure of Sunni socio-religious thought. What ruled and created flows

For example, see the views of Ibn Hanbal in this regard, Al-A'immah al-Arba'ah, vol. -١ ۴, pp. ١١٩-٢٠, and also Ibn Jawzi, Manaqib al-Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal, especially pp. .۴٢٩-۶٢

was the public thought that shaped Islam and is still active despite all changes and .developments

Suspensionist [irja'] Thought

Another factor in this regard was the thought that emerged from mid-Umayyad period and grew and extended rapidly, i.e. the thoughts of suspensionism [murajja'ah].(١) Why this thought was created and extended is an independent question itself. However, what is certain is that the Umayyads welcomed it very much (and worked hard to promote and exploit it.(٢

Suspensionism was in fact a reaction to the strict thought of the Rebels, who said that even the doers of minor sins were infidels and had to be killed. Such strictness resulted in a form of laxity, believing that one's deeds do not harm one's faith(٣) and that one cannot judge the good or bad personalities of individuals according to their behavior and deeds. What was important was the individual's faith, but what he did neither mattered nor could one judge the individuals in this world based on that. This was some form of religious and doctrinal justification for any dissipation and breaking of the rules. Therefore, it was desirable to the reckless people, who constituted a vast portion in that time while it was consistent with the pre-Islamic ignorance heritage, (which was still in place and had an unrivalled domination.(۴

One of the characteristics of the Ignorance period was the people's hate of and escaping from any limit, law and rule. The Ignorance culture was a free culture that would not accept laws. More importantly, it was a culture of

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Postponing/suspending judgment on whether someone is a believer or not - ١ .[[translator

۲- The suspensionists say, "If a person has faith, sin does not harm him as if someone is an infidel, his obedience will not make him profit. Some of their sects believed that faith consists of knowledge of God and humbleness towards Him, that kindness is in the heart and, if somebody has these attributes, he is a faithful person and will not be harmed by abandoning the religious duties and committing sins and will not be punished for the same." Al-Fikr as-Siyasi ash-Shi'i, p. ۶۱, quoted from part ۸ of Sharh Mawaqif.

۳- - Concerning the Heretics (Zandiqs) and the licentious, see Husayn 'Atwan, Al-Zandaqah wa'sh-Shu'ubiyyah fi'l-'Asr al-'Abbasi al-Awwal.

۴- For further information on the suspensionists and the sociocultural background in which they appeared, see An-Nazm al-Islamiyyah, pp. ۱۴۳-۹ and Fajr al-Islam, pp. ۲۷۹-۸۲. To find sayings blaming them and the fatalists, see Ahmad ibn Hanbal, As-Sunnah.

laxity and especially lechery. The conditions of those days required such a culture and the available evidence confirms this. Islam was in contradiction with this culture in all its aspects. Although Islam made important changes, the culture that had brought up its children according to its own characteristics and value system was too powerful, influential and lasting to retreat from its rival this soon, although it was not at the same time so strong as to deny it and rule again. However, it could wear the mask of religion and continue its life, and it did so.(۱)

The lustful nature of the Arabs and their unwillingness to accept obligations and limitations, the vast facilities and endless wealth of the conquered lands, the beautiful female slaves and the large number of boy slaves,(۲) getting familiar with means of pleasure which had never been imaginable to Arabs, all together created conditions in which the people looked for a justification to resort to, which would reduce their internal pressures and the pressures of their conscience and would provide a religious way to take pleasure. The fact is that the willingness of the people to reckless pleasure at the time of the Umayyad was not weaker than that of the Umayyad themselves. As an example, see the book Al-Aghani.(۳)

The ignorant nature, the strong psychological desire and the sociocultural conditions required the thought of suspensionism. Therefore, when it came to the fore, many of

the people rushed towards it. This was indeed desirable to the Umayyads

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Regarding the cultural characteristics of the pre-Islamic Ignorant culture, see Fajr -۱ al-Islam, pp. ۱-۶۶, and, best of all, Mu'allaqat Saba', translated by 'Abdu'l-Muhammad .Ayati, especially pp. ۱۱-۲۱

A man from among the children of the Immigrants said, "The sons of these non- -۲ Arabs are as if they have dug a tunnel out of the paradise while our children are like .the blackened firewood of furnaces." 'Uyun al-Akhbar, vol. ۴, p. ۴۰

Other than the book Al-Aghani, for example see Abu Nawas's Divan. The strange -۳ thing is that music was so common in Medina that the Kufis said sarcastically about them, "Jurisprudence has to be learned in Kufah with the Hanafites. Medina is the city of music." For example, refer to the syllabic poems of the Kufis. Al-A'immah al-Arba'ah, pp. ۲, ۹-۱۰. Indeed, music was promoted in Mecca and Medina in Yazid's time. Fajr al-Islam, p. ۸۱. Interestingly, one like Barbahari, who is a great Hanbalite and, therefore, emotionally attached to Mecca and Medina, thus quotes from 'Abdullah ibn Mubarak and advises others to do this, "Do not take anything of heresy from the Kufis, of bullying from Syrians, of fatalism from Basris, of suspensionism from Khurasanians, of grammar from Meccans and of music from Medinans." Then, he .adds, "Do not take these from them." Tabaqat al-Hanabilah, p. ۷

because of two reasons. Firstly, it was in harmony with their desires and whims and, when the people adopted a lecherous life and broke the religious and moral limits, then no one could criticize them for the same reasons. Secondly, the principle that one's deeds do not affect one's faith immunized them as they could resort to it to say that if the ruler or his governors, who were often more corrupt and reckless than themselves, practiced a corrupt life, drank wine and violated the limits, it did not matter. What mattered was the faith, which was not affected by the deeds. The deeds not only do not exclude him from the realm of the religion, but do not reduce his faith and spiritual position. They could thus disarm their critics before the public opinion as they said that one would lose their faith and piety by doing such things and

(would be disqualified for being a ruler.(١)

Nevertheless, this thought was supported and encouraged by the Umayyads and played an important role, at least during the Umayyad period, in legalizing the ruler, thus securing his position against any harm or criticism. As we have already said, there were also other factors involved, which we will not mention here.

Chapter ۴: Power And Justice

Power and Justice

In the previous chapters, we talked about two important principles of Sunni and Shi'ite political thought and the theoretical differences between the two and the way they formed in practice the history and the psychological and social structures of their followers.

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١ - The fact is that the corruption of the Umayyads and their governors was so extensive that they could not continue their rule by resorting to ways that could acceptably acquit and justify them and their actions—such as suspensionism. We provide two examples here. Yazid ibn 'Abdu'l-Malik, the son of Yazid ibn Mu'awiyah's daughter, and the successor of 'Umar ibn 'Abdu'l-'Aziz, was a very lecherous and capricious person. He had two female servants by the names of Habbabah and Salamah, whom he loved very much. First Salamah and after that, which is said to be ١٧ days afterwards, Habbabah died. Yet, Yazid did not bury Habbabah for a few days. The others blamed him and he finally buried her. But after a while he exhumed her to see her again. Ma'athir al-Inaqah fi Ma'alim al-Khilafah, pp. ١۴۵-۶. The author of Al-Aghani recounts that Harith bin Khalid Makhzumi was appointed by 'Abdullah ibn Marwan as governor of Mecca. Harith loved 'A'ishah, Talhah's daughter. 'A'ishah sent a message to Harith for him to delay the prayer until she finished a ritual circumambulation. Harith ordered the muezzins to delay the prayer until 'A'ishah finished circumambulation. The hajj pilgrims took this as an unacceptable move until 'Abdullah deposed him. Fajr al-Islam, p. ٨٢, quoted from Aghani, ٣, p. ١٠٣. See also the

vivid description of Abu Hamzah Khariji about Yazid ibn 'Abdu'l-Malik in a sermon of his in Mecca. He gives an account of his corrupt personality, lechery and lavish spendings and his adventures with Habbabah and Salamah. Al-Bayan wa't-Tabyin, vol. ٢, p. ١٠١. The al-Aghani's report of the corruption of the Umayyad and 'Abbasid caliphs is so disgraceful that Sunni fanatics have denied the book and the claims of its author. From among the predecessors, see Al-'Awasim min al-Qawasim, pp. ٢٥١-٤٩, .and, from among the contemporaries, see Mu'allifat fi'l-Mizan, pp. ٣-١٠٠

In this Chapter, we study the third principle and then go back to the main discussion, i.e. the political movements within the Shi'ite and Sunni territories in the contemporary .history and their differences

As we said in the previous chapter, the third basic factor in the development of Sunni political thought is that they are sensitive to power and security and the power that can provide and maintain security while Shi'ites are sensitive to justice and the strict implementation of the Prophet's (S) tradition the way it was at the time of the Prophet himself, rather than the way it was later interpreted. To them, what is important, obligatory, and sacred consists of a grand strong power in whose light security is .provided either against the internal rebels or against the foreign threats and invaders

Although this is approved by Shi'ism to a certain extent, it has not attached a full value to be absolutely true. This neither agrees with their jurisprudential or theological foundations nor is approved by the practice of the Infallible Imams. Now let's see why and how this principle appeared among Sunnis and what the factors by which it was ?affected are

It shall be said in brief that three important factors were involved. The first factor is the concept of justice, which is unlike that of the concept of justice with Shi'ites, both in jurisprudential and in theological and philosophical terms. The second factor is the concept and duties of the government in old times. Finally, the

p: ٢١٣

third factor relates to the historical realities and necessities, each of which will be

.discussed

The Concept of Justice

The difference in the Shi'ite and Sunni perception of justice is too clear to require any explanation here. Although the Mu'tazilite perception and interpretation of justice were close to and in some cases similar to those of Shi'ites, the Ash'arite interpretation was far different. It was this school that was later dominant and influenced the development and organization of Sunni jurisprudential and theological .foundations

The important thing in the meantime was that the Ash'arite interpretation of justice principally had a form that made it unimportant. The point was not that they considered it to be important and critical but offered another interpretation, rather, it was that they provided a meaning for it that made it loose its significance, which was .perhaps desirable to them

When they denied rational agreeableness or disagreeableness of something, in fact they reduced the concept of justice to a level that it would be compatible with any oppressive and tyrannical action. In other words, the thought and ideal of justice was reduced to reality and whatever that existed while the existing reality was made the criterion of judgment rather than a superior concept to be so. Because of this, it would not make sense anymore to evaluate and judge this reality based on its compatibility and incompatibility with that superior concept. When rational agreeableness or disagreeableness is ignored, in fact the concept and nature of justice has been ignored rather than that a new

p: ۲۱۴

(definition has been provided based on such denial.(۱

Such an interpretation of justice naturally provides the best ground for rejecting any ideal beyond the present reality, and it actually did so. Here, it is not a discussion of justice or whether it has been done or not. Principally, there is no situation superior to the present one, based on now to define justice and to evaluate the present

(situation.(۲

The author of the well-known book Al-Mawaqif, who is one of the greatest and most rationalist Ash'arite theologians, concerning agreeableness or disagreeableness says, "Disagreeableness is what is prohibited by the shari'ah and agreeable is contrary thereto. To the reason, nothing is judged as agreeable or disagreeable. These two do not return to another real and true matter within one's action so that the shari'ah would reveal it. Rather, it is the shari'ah that creates agreeableness or disagreeableness and defines them. If it becomes the other way round and what it considers as offensive, it considers as good and what it considers to be good, it .considers as offensive, this will be possible and the result would be reversed

However, the Mu'tazilites say, "The criterion for recognizing the agreeableness or disagreeableness of something is reason and one's action is per se either good or bad while the shari'ah only discovers and clarifies this reality. Then, it makes on sense to reverse the matter because goodness and badness relate to real things and are not (contractual."(۳

As we said, such an interpretation of good and bad and

p: ۲۱۵

۱- A practical example of this way of thinking can be seen in Ibn 'Arabi, Al-'Awasim min al-Qawasim, and especially the footnotes of Muhibb ad-Din Khatib. These two provide a justification for and interpret the wrong actions of those whom they intend to defend. Actually, they consider only the reality and not anything beyond it as the criterion. According to them, justice is what existed rather than a superior concept according to which the existing situation has to be evaluated. Compare with the way Mu'awiyah is introduced by Ziyad and that his actions were political and for the maintenance of power; Al-Jawhar an-Nafis fi Siyasah ar-Ra'is, p. ۷۳. For example, while defending Mu'awiyah on his ordering the killing of Hajar ibn 'Uday—which aroused the objection of all even that of 'A'ishah ('Ali wa Banuh, p. ۲۱۹)—Ibn 'Arabi says, "If you say that his killing is injustice, unless it is proved to be right for a reason,

we will say, ‘The principle is that the killing is right and the one who claims that it was wrong has to prove his claim. If it was wrong then all the people have to curse Mu‘awiyah while in Baghdad, which is the center of the ‘Abbasid caliphate, whose rivalry with the Umayyad is known to all, it is written on mosque doors, ‘The best of the people after the Prophet (S) is Abu Bakr and then ‘Umar and then ‘Uthman and .then ‘Ali and then Mu‘awiyah.’” p. ۲۱۳

The theoretical example of this perception can be found in the works and views of -۲ Ibn Taymiyyah, Ibn Qayyim and Ibn Hanbal. As-Siyasah ash-Shar‘iyyah, pp. ۱۰, ۲۱; A‘lam al-Mawqi‘in, vol. ۳, pp. ۳-۶; Al-Ahkam as-Sultaniyyah. Also see endnote ۵۴ to the .previous chapter

.Al-Mawaqif fi ‘Ilm al-Kalam, p. ۳۲۳ -۳

its criteria will leave no room for the concept of justice and basic reason. More importantly, the rational criteria of recognizing truth or falsehood of religious texts, and especially the sayings, will be eliminated while the intellectual, doctrinal and psychological background necessary for accepting them, with a religious and shari‘ah-based acceptance, will provide the ground for any oppressive and corrupt action and will ultimately give a good reason to those in power and the bad clerics to document their oppressions and violations with the religion in order to achieve their goals. More importantly, the religion will also be made liable to such exploitation and (misuse.(۱

Unlawful exploitation of the religion, especially by those in power, has generally been done by falsifying the reason in the name of the religion. When reason is put aside with all its capabilities and limitations, especially as regards to religion, the oppression and superstitions will replace it. This has always been favored by the misusers of the religion. Thus, when reason is falsified in one of the most sensitive and important .religious discussions, i.e. justice, such results will inevitably follow

Results of the Two Different Interpretations

It should be added that the difference in the Mu‘tazilite and Shi‘ite perception and interpretation and those of the Ash‘arites of justice did not make them create the

most just sociopolitical system through their history. They were in practice more or less the same and the belief in the principle of justice did not entail sociopolitical justice. There was essentially no difference between the Mu‘tazilites, who were

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For further explanations, see the introduction to Min al-‘Aqidah ila’th-Thawrah, vol. -١ .١, pp. ٣, ۴١

at the service of Ma’mun, Mu‘tasim and Wathiq, and the Ash‘arites and Ash‘arite-like thinkers after and before them although these caliphs, especially Ma’mun, were considerably different from the caliphs before and after him; but this was mainly due to his better cultured and freethinking character rather than the advise or attention of the Mu‘tazilites around him.(١)

This applies to the Shi‘ites to a large extent as well. It is difficult to accept that Shi‘ite sultans throughout history were more just and democratic than their Sunni counterparts.(٢) The desire for justice and administering justice, especially in the Islamic east, which lacked the necessary sociopolitical institutions for the administration of affairs by considering the appropriate interests and requirements rather than personal decisions, was more than anything indebted to their own internal and personal tendencies and to the general conditions of the territories they ruled.

Nevertheless, despite all this, it cannot be denied that the two, i.e. the Mu‘tazilites and especially Shi‘ites and Ash‘arites, were and acted in two different ways in terms of guiding the ruling system to the right way, dethroning it or establishing a just system. In other words, the outcome of belief in justice and the way these two interpreted is shown when standing up against the ruler. One of the most important factors that called the Mu‘tazilites and Shi‘ites to stand up against the tyrants was their understanding of justice.(٣)As such interpretation was principally not considered or believed in by the Ash‘arites, it would not make sense anymore to stand

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۱- See Amir H. Saddiqi, Caliphate and Kingship, pp. ۲-۵.

۲- This is approved by Shi‘ites as well. See Ash-Shi‘ah wa’l-Ḥakimun, pp. ۷-۸, and also Al-Fikr as-Siyasi ash-Shi‘i, pp. ۲۶۸-۷۱.

۳- For example, see the actions of Ghaylan Damashqi, who, based on a concept different from the Umayyad interpretation, called the people of Armenia to rise up. Dhikr Bab al-Mu‘tazilah, pp. ۱۶-۱۷, and also the justice-seeking risings of Shi‘ites and the Mu‘tayelites.; Al-Intifadat ash-Shi‘ah, pp. ۹۷-۱۱۰.

up against the sultan by relying on it. They denied rational agreeableness or disagreeableness and they did not have any criterion beyond the existing factors in order to evaluate what was there.

Therefore, in history, the Mu‘tazilite and especially Shi‘ites have had many justice-seeking movements while similar examples cannot be found with the Ash‘arites, Salafis or Traditionists. What they actually had and have was movements that, according to them, sought to reject heresy and to defend and establish the tradition.(۱)

Indeed, their different understanding and interpretation of justice is not the only factor for this difference. There were other factors as well. Undoubtedly, however, this different perception has had and will have the greatest share. In other words, although the belief in the principle of justice actually did not bring about sociopolitical justice, its acceptance provided the best ground for justice-seeking movements.

The story of justice-seeking and liberal movements throughout the history of Islam is itself the best confirmation of this. Such movements did not exist within the Ash‘arite and Traditionist territories while they were abundant within the Shi‘ite and Mu‘tazilite territories. This relation was so strong and powerful that, in periods in which such tendencies appeared for any reason, the grounds were prepared for Mu‘tazilite thought and especially the Shi‘ite ideology. Although the Shi‘ite ideology was welcomed for reasons beyond its belief in the principle of justice, the belief in this principle had yet a basic role.

It was precisely because of this that the Mu‘tazilites and especially Shi‘ites were

attacked by those

۱- To find out about the sensitivities of dogmatic Sunnis concerning the ideal ruler and ruling system and that there was no place therein for justice, see Manaqib al-Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, p. ۴۳۸, and also Tabaqat al-Hanabilah, vol. ۲, p. ۳۱, and concerning how a hard-hearted tyrannical roué such as Mutawakkil is praised simply on the ground that, in their view, he resisted heresy. The praise is one like that given to the first caliph and ‘Umar ibn ‘Abdu’l-‘Aziz.

in power, the clerics and their affiliate propagandists. The ruling oppression prepared the ground for the growth of justice-seeking movements. However, as the dominant religious thought, which was promoted and probably created by the rulers, could not fulfill this need because of its lack of belief in the principle of justice, the revolutionaries had to face and encourage religions that claimed to seek justice.(۱) As Shi‘ism and Mu‘tazilah were so, attempts were made to give them a bad reputation so as to divert the public opinion from them. This failed indeed. Part of the pessimism among Sunni masses about these two results from the same preventive and counter-propagandist actions.(۲)

What has been said so far was about the theological concept of justice. Now we have to see what its jurisprudential concept was and what results it entailed. In this connection, contrary to the previous one, the Mu‘tazilites are like non-Mu‘tazilites and the difference is between Shi‘ites and non-Shi‘ites.

Jurisprudential Concept of Justice

The fact is that the concept of justice is not jurisprudentially very much different among Shi‘ites and Sunnis. The basic difference is in considering justice as a qualification, most importantly for the communal prayer leader and the Friday communal prayer leader as well as the ruler. Shi‘ites deem justice as a necessary for all of these while Sunnis do not define it as a qualification for the communal prayer leader and the Friday communal prayer leader and only some Sunnis consider the

communal prayer leadership of a corrupt and heretic person as religiously (undesirable(٣)

p: ٢١٩

The fact is that the infleucne of Shi‘ite views on a pressurized and suffocated - ١ society like ours is more than the influence of Sunni views as the latter does not benefit anyone other than the existing ruling system. Min al-‘Aqidah ila’th-Thawrah, .vol. ١, p. ٢۶

Concerning the blaming of the Mu‘tazilites and how the founders of Sunni belief - ٢ view them, see Tabaqat al-Hnabilah, vol. ٢, pp. ٣٠-١, and also Al-Ibanah ‘an Usul ad-.Diyanah, pp. ١٣-١۶

Fiqh as-Sunnah, vol. ١, pp. ٢٠٩-١٠, Al-Mahalli, vol. ۴, pp. ٢١٣-۴. You can find the - ٣ .elaborate account in Bidayah al-Mujtahid wa Nihayah al-Muqtasid, vol. ١, pp. ١۴٧-٨

as many of them do not consider justice to be a necessary qualification of the ruler .either

What is important in this discussion is the justice of the communal prayer leader and the Friday communal prayer leader because they have differing views on the ruler’s .justice. Now let’s see what results this difference entailed

Prior to entering the discussion, it is necessary to note the special and sensitive position of the communal prayer leader and the Friday communal prayer leader in early Islam. In that time, prayers or Friday communal prayers were socio-politically far more important than they are today. These two, especially the Friday communal prayer, were the key to maintaining Islam, unity, integrity and, finally, stability and security of the society. It indicated the health of thought and belief in the participants and their being on the religion agreed on by the Muslims.(١) It showed that the society accepted the order of their emir and ruler and recognized him. It was through this prayer that the rulers, sultans and caliphs were recognized and their power and .position would be stabilized and consolidated

At that time, the cities and the other points of concentrated population were small and

had small populations. All the people and especially the men considered it their duty to participate in the public and Friday communal prayers, while this participation was obligatory in many respects.(۲) Some Sunni jurisprudents consider communal prayers and all Sunni jurisprudents consider Friday communal prayers to be obligatory. Shi'ite jurisprudents consider participation in Friday

p: ۲۲۰

For example, see how he sets forth and asks the questions from Imam Baqir - ۱ concerning attending the communal prayers. Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. ۵, p. ۳۸۱, saying no. ۵ and also saying no. ۸, p. ۳۷۷; Ibid., and also Mustadrak Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. ۶, p. .۴۵۷

The Hanbalites consider it obligatory to take part in communal prayers. See Al-Fiqh -۲ 'ala'l-Madhahib al-Arba'ah, vol. ۱, p. ۳۷۵. The Formists consider communal prayer participation obligatory for those who have the relevant conditions. Bidayah al-Mujtahid, vol. ۱, p. ۱۴۳.

communal prayers during the presence of an infallible imam to be obligatory as well. Many of them consider it obligatory even in the absence of an infallible imam if the appropriate conditions are provided. It was, therefore, natural that these two prayers would have a high political value so far so as to become the most important indicator of belief in Islam and unity in the society.(۱)

According to the above points and its sensitivity, who other than the most prominent person, at least apparently the most prominent, could lead it? It would not make sense to give the responsibility for this most important symbol of the community of the believers and the key to the unity and stability of the society to someone other than such a person. The people also did not expect anything other than this. Apart from this, the jurisprudential fundamentals would approve of and reinforce such a current. We had better say that the people's perception of the communal prayer leader, the Friday communal prayer leader and imamate was in harmony with the appearances of the orders of the shari'ah.(۲) The shari'ah legislator required the most prominent person to be the prayer leader although the meaning of prominence and

the application of the most prominent person changed in the later times under the pressure of sociopolitical necessities.

During the Prophet's (S) time, he led both prayers in Medina or in any other part when he was present. Where he was absent, the prayers would be led by

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۱- You can find the rejection of the arguments of opponents of permission of Friday communal prayers in the time of Occultation in Jami' al-Maqasid, vol. ۲, pp. ۳۸۰-۷۴. Also see Salat al-Jumu'ah by Haydar ibn al-Mawla Muhammad al-Dizfuli, as commented on by Shaykh Ansari, and Risalah Salat al-Jumu'ah by Muhaqqiq Karki in Rasa'il Muhaqqiq Karki, vol. ۱, pp. ۴۰-۱۱۷.

۲- Kanz al-'Ummal, vol. ۷, pp. ۵۸۱-۲.

the representative, substitute, emir or ruler that he appointed. After the Prophet (S) passed away, the first caliph led the prayers. This specially helped him on the first days in gaining acceptance for and establishing his caliphate.(۱) This current continued in this way until the end of the period of the Senior Caliphs and also when the Umayyad took power. (۲)

For example, concerning the permission of the infallible imam or his special or general substitute for saying the Friday communal prayer and on how to appoint the Friday communal prayer, Muhaqqiq Karki says, "...The principle in this issue, before the consensus, is the agreement of the Muslims to the effect that the Prophet, in his own time, appointed the Friday communal prayers and judges. After the Prophet (S), the caliphs did so. As it is not right for one to be a judge with the imam's permission, it is also not right to be the Friday communal prayer leader without such permission. This is not reasoning by analogy. It is referring to the continuous practice and opposing it is violating the consensus."(۳)

As quoted by Pederson, "From the early days of Islam, the ruler also led the prayers. He was the commander of war, head of government and leader of communal prayers. In the same manner, province governors were both in charge of prayers and

taxes. He would lead prayers, especially the Friday communal prayers, in which he would deliver sermons. In his absence, the police chief would represent him. ,However

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۱- It was because of Abu Bakr's leading the prayers that people like Hasan Basri, Ibn Hazm and a group of the Traditionists said that his caliphate had been explicitly .advised by the Prophet (S). Ma'alim al-Khilafah fi'l-Fikr as-Siyasi al-Islami, p. ۱۳۳

۲- For further explanation, see Al-Badr az-Zahir fi Salat al-Jumu'ah wa'l-Musafir, pp. .۶-۸

۳- Al-Muhaqqiq al-Karki, Rasail, vol. ۱, p. ۱۴۴.

this changed in the time of the 'Abbasids and the caliph would not regularly lead the (prayers."(۱)

What existed in the time of the Senior Caliphs was not that problematic. The first two caliphs and their governors would keep the appearances of the shari'ah although the conditions changed during 'Uthman's time, especially in the second half, and people such as Walid ibn 'Aqabah was appointed as governor—governor of Kufah who stood to pray while drunk, saying four prayer units for the [۲-unit] morning prayer, besmearing the altar with the effects of drunkenness.(۲) However, such cases were rare and ignorable. Imam 'Ali's ('a) time is well-known. Basically, there could be and .was no problem in this period

The problem shows itself seriously from the time of the Umayyad, at which time the justice of the communal and Friday communal prayer leader is overshadowed, interpreted and justified by the realities and necessities. It is gradually reduced to a .level that is forgotten

The heritage of the Prophet (S) and the Senior Caliphs required that the caliph and his representatives and governors would lead the communal and Friday communal prayers. The caliphs would not be content with less than this, not because they sought to enforce the Prophet's (S) tradition and that of the Senior Caliphs but because failing

to do so would contradict their rule, establishment and legality. They wanted to be in power and to govern and this could be achieved if the one in power would lead the communal and Friday communal prayers

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۱- Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam, p. ۳۵۰.

۲- Al-Imamah wa's-Siyasah, vol. ۱, p. ۳۴; Fiqh as-Sunnah, vol. ۱, p. ۲۰۹.

as well. Thus, they led both of the prayers.

It was a necessity at this time. According to the history sources relating to those days, the Umayyads were not so willing to lead prayers, especially on Fridays because the Friday communal prayer leader had to give sermons while this was difficult for them to do. In this regard, Goldziher says, "Delivering sermons was not easy for Umayyad caliphs but they consented to do it so as to remind the people that they were in charge. 'Abdu'l-Malik was asked, "Why do you have a white beard at this early age?" "How do you expect me not to," he replied, "While I have to deliver a sermon once a week and expose my thoughts to be judged by the others."(۱)

Reluctance to deliver sermons was not limited to the Umayyad caliphs only. Their province governors did not like to do it either. Even an eloquent person such as 'Ubaydullah ibn Ziyad would consider it as an impediment to the pleasure of governing.(۲) Another emir told the people, "Before becoming the emir, Friday was the best of my days while nowadays it is the worst because I have to deliver sermons."(۳)

On the other hand, the problem was that the Muslims had to take part in regular and Friday communal prayers. Both the previous customs required this and the religious texts recommended it. It was a shar'i obligation. Indeed, it has to be added that, from the early days and even in the Prophet's (S) time,

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۱- Goldziher, Muslim Studies, vol. ۲, p. ۵۰.

.Uyun al-Akhbar, vol. ۲, p. ۲۸۲' -۲

.Ibid., p. ۲۸۱ -۳

the people were asked to take part in regular and Friday communal prayers and those who refused to do so would be severely punished.(۱) The point was not that an individual, by refusing to take part in a communal or Friday communal prayer would be a sinner by violating an obligation, the more important thing was that he could not do so. He was forced to do so because such non-participation would be deemed as an entire or partial rejection of the accepted religion by the believers or as rejection of the present government or denying its legality or compulsory obedience of it. No ruler, (especially the oppressive Umayyad rulers, would bear such a thing.(۲

Denying the Justice Qualification

Considering these conditions, what way was there other than denying justice as a condition for qualification of communal and Friday communal prayer leaders. The most committed individual in the Umayyad dynasty, other than 'Umar ibn 'Abdu'l-'Aziz, who was an exceptional person, was Mu'awiyah himself. However, his behavior was different from the minimum consideration of which was necessary according to the shari'ah legislator and was practiced by the earlier caliphs. He went so far as to say prayers different in form from what the Prophet (S) and the Senior (Caliphs read—He is the first person to deliver a Friday sermon while sitting.(۳

The caliphs after him and his governors were in more inappropriate conditions, so much so as if they were absolutely unfamiliar with the religion and did not think of .anything other than ruling and pleasures

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That the Prophet (S) blamed and even threatened those who refused to attend -۱ regular and Friday communal prayers has been cited by Shi'ites as well as Sunnis. See Kanz al-'Ummal, vol. ۷. For the necessity of attending the communal prayers, see pp. ۵۸۱-۲, for attending Friday communal prayers, see pp. ۷۲۸-۳۳. Similar to the contents of these sayings are sayings ۶, ۹, ۱۰ in Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. ۵, pp. ۳۷۶-۷, and can also be

.found in Jami‘ al-Madarik, vol. ١, p. ۴٨٩ cite from Ash-Shahadat in Wasa’il ash-Shi‘ah

٢ - In this respect, the ‘Abbasids were like the Umayyads. They had allocated exclusively to themselves all that concerned regular and Friday communal prayers. “One of the most important symbols of religious mastery of the ‘Abbasid caliph was that a drum was played in front of his house at the times of the five prayers so as to announce the time while no one else, even the crown princes, were allowed to have a drum beaten in front of their house, so that no body could share this symbol of mastery with the caliph.” Muhammad Safar az-Zahrani, Nizam al-Wizarah fi’d-Dawlah .al-‘Abbasiyyah, p. ٢۶, cited by Ibn al-Jawzi, Al-Muntazam, vol. ٧, p. ٩٢

٣ - Fiqh as-Sunnah, vol. ١, p. ٢٧٢. The author thus quotes Sha‘bi as saying, “At a time, Mu‘awiyah grew fat and had a protuberant belly, then he delivered the sermon while .sitting.” Cf. Wasa’il ash-Shi‘ah, vol. ۵, p. ٣١, saying ١

They had the power and would lead the regular and Friday communal prayers and the people had to say their prayers with them. Now the problem was if such prayers were separate or not. This is other than if the regular and Friday communal prayer leaders were qualified to lead prayers and principally what such qualifications were. Is justice or not committing sins or at least not persisting on committing sins one of these qualifications or not? Is it possible to take as prayer leader a corrupt tyrant who ?commits any crime? If yes, is the prayer of those standing behind him accepted

The only solution was to deny the qualification of justice. Indeed, if a development had occurred at a time when the Umayyads entered the scene, no interrelation would have been established between the governance and legality of the ruler and the regular and Friday communal prayer leadership. Most probably, justice would have not been denied in this case, like in the case of the judge and witness. However, such a development did not occur and, therefore, they had to interpret and justify the issue to a certain extent as to the qualifications of regular and Friday communal prayer leaders, so as to deny the justice qualification in practice or at least reduce the issue (to reluctance in saying prayers behind a corrupt tyrant.(١

Indeed, Shi‘ites did not face such a problem. They considered the Umayyads to be .illegal usurpers and did not have to accept those conditions and obligations

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۱ - Concerning the corrupt heretic imamate and the view of each of the four branches of the religion, see Al-Fiqh ‘ala’l-Madhahib al-Arba‘ah, vol. ۱, p. ۴۲۹.

Consequently, they did not have to face such interpretations and justifications. Apart from this, the texts of the divine decrees they accepted, which had been passed to them through the Infallible Imams, explicitly defined justice as one of the qualifications of the regular and Friday communal prayer leaders;(۱) although this does not mean that the Shi‘ites never took part in regular and Friday communal prayers in the past. They took part in these prayers and generally deemed their prayers as accepted. In their view, in certain cases such prayers were accepted as well as worthy of being highly rewarded. (۲) However, such religious rewards and such pious deeds had their own special reasons. It was not, for example, because they considered the justice qualification unnecessary for a regular or Friday communal prayer leader.

The fact is that Sunnis’ failure to accept the justice qualification and Shi‘ites’ accepting of it affected the development of the jurisprudential and theological structures of the two, their sociopsychological structure and ideological and religious sensitivities more than it seems in the beginning. Not accepting this condition meant recognizing the present condition and whatever related to it, although there were other factors involved. Yet, this was the most important, effective and finally the most critical factor.

Although the Sunni jurisprudential and theological structure is so that the ruler’s obedience is compulsory,(۳) the problem is if the Sunni masses throughout the history accepted the rulers as legal only because of these reasons. The complex theological discussions and the arguments in

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۱ - See Wasa’il ash-Shi‘ah, vol. ۵, chapter on non-permission of praying behind a

.corrupt person, pp. ۳۹۲-۵

.Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. ۵, pp. ۳۸۱-۲ -۲

For example, see Al-Fasl fi'l-Milal wa'l-Hawa wa'l-Nihal, vol. ۴, p. ۸۷, and also A'lam -۳ .al-Mawqi'in, vol. ۱, p. ۴۸

jurisprudence were and are far above the average level of culture of the masses. It was not through familiarity with these discussions that they accepted to obey the rulers. Principally, such discussions did not have a role in their religious perception and understanding. Their understanding and perception were too simple and limited to .digest these ideas

Importance of Denying the Justice Qualification

In other words, the problem is not simply what the natural and logical requirement of the Sunni jurisprudential and theological structure is. More importantly is which part of this large collection exists in their thought, mind, faith and belief, i.e. what the perception of the mass of the people is of this collection, what its limits are and what the interrelations of the various components are. What is living and effective is this understanding and perception and it is the same that play a role in the society and on the scene of the history. Although such religious perception changes to a certain extent in any time and condition depending on the conditions, there are generally fixed elements in the changes which are affected by the fixed principles and .fundamentals of the religion itself

The most tangible, understandable and routine part of the religious faith of a Muslim was and is the prayers. Considering the fact that, in the early periods, the Muslims said their prayers always communally and took part in Friday communal prayers and that these prayers were always led by the caliphs, their representatives or emirs, and, to the people, such leading symbolized

the government, legality and religious acceptability of the caliph or ruler. Is it not that the justice qualification has the most important share in accepting the ruler and the

?present condition and in legalizing his position

This is truer especially in the early centuries when the people were obliged to take part in regular and Friday communal prayers and those in power and even the regular were more sensitive to the participation of the various walks of life and to the emirs who led the prayers, at least on Fridays. However, later, when such obligation and sensitivity were attenuated, the prayers were led by people other than the emirs, who were generally and rather entirely appointed directly or indirectly by them.(١) However, the effects of this current, especially before such attenuation occurred, affected the jurisprudential and theological structure and the psycho religious .structure of the Muslims

It was not important here to accept the ruler's governance when accepting his prayer leadership. More important than that was the thought based on which the leadership of the corrupt tyrant was allowed. Such a thought permeated the other aspects and resulted in deeming as acceptable saying prayers behind such individuals and even paying the alms and religious tax to them and going on hajj pilgrimages and jihads with them. Even a cautious pious person like Ibn Hanbal got to a point as to say, "Jihad along with emirs is allowed until the day of resurrection whether they are just or unjust and they may distribute

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Al-Badr az-Zahir, pp. ٧-٨, and also Min al-'Aqidah ila'th-Thawrah, vol. ١, pp. ٢٢-٣, - ١ which critically studies how a regular or Friday communal prayer leader is appointed .by the sultan and the mutual relations of the two

.the spoils of war and enforce punishments

No one may make sarcastic remarks about or fight them. It is allowed to pay alms to them and one who gives alms to them, whether they are good people or not, has done his duty. It is allowed to say prayers behind them and one who violates this is heretic and has abandoned the tradition of the Prophet (S). If one does not believe that prayers behind emirs, whether the latter are just or corrupt, are religiously

allowed, he has not understood the good aspects of Friday communal prayers. The tradition is that you have to say two units of prayer behind them and believe that it is a perfect prayer without having the smallest doubt about this."(١)

Now we will examine what the thought was and where its root was. The main origin of this thought, which was relied on for verifying the truth of affairs, was that such things as prayer, religious tax and jihad are inherently good and desirable and the shari'ah legislator has ordered them. The important thing is to perform them rather than the way in which they are performed. The important thing is that the obligated person has to fulfill his duties according to the rules defined by the shari'ah legislator and it is not important with whom the act is performed.

The important thing is to say the regular and Friday communal prayers and for the Muslims to participate therein. It is not important who leads them.

١- Al-A'immah al-Arba'ah, vol. ۴, pp. ١١٩-٢٠.

What is important is not to give up the duty of jihad, it does not matter under whose command and with what motivation it is done. What is important is to pay alms and religious tax as part of religious fees but it does not matter to whom they are given, whether the one to whom it is given is a corrupt roué or not, and for what purposes they are used.

This is thus explained by Hasan Basri where he intends to account for the acceptability of the prayer of one whose prayer is led by a hypocrite, "The believer's prayer behind a hypocrite will not harm him and the hypocrite's prayer behind a believer will not benefit him."(١) He expresses, more explicitly than 'Abdullah bin 'Umar, "Prayer is good. I do not mind who will be my partner in performing it."(٢)

Ibn Hazm says in this regard, "We do not know any Companion who refused to say his prayer behind Mukhtar, 'Ubaydullah ibn Ziyad, Hajjaj or any person more corrupt than them. God says, 'Cooperate on good deeds and do not cooperate on sin and enmity.'

There is no good thing better than the prayer and saying it in mosques. Then it is forbidden for us to help it. The same is true about fasting, hajj and jihad. We will accompany the one who calls us to them and we will not accept the invitation of and will not help the one who calls us to sin. These are the

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.Al-Mahalli, vol. ۴, p. ۲۱۴ -۱

.Ibid., p. ۲۱۳ -۲

(views of Abu Hanifah, Shafi'i and Abu Sulayman."(۱

Ibn Qudamah, who is one of the great Hanbalite jurisprudents, says, "It is obligatory for Muslims to participate in communal prayers on Friday and the Two Feasts even if the prayer leader is corrupt, a roué or heretic because the duties are Islamic rites that the rulers of Muslims perform. Then, failing to perform the prayers behind them will (result in the prayers being abandoned."(۲

Deeds and the Conditions of Deeds

From this point of view, what matters is the deed per se without considering its conditions while, since the conditions are part of the deed, it cannot be so. According to them, for example the regular and Friday communal prayers are only for worshipping purposes and, therefore, they recommend and emphasize them by mentioning the good aspects and their desirability—no matter who leads them—and consider them as worthy of being rewarded. Although this may be true about worships to which there is an individual aspect, this cannot be true about regular and .Friday communal prayers or about jihad

If we have accepted that the regular and Friday communal prayers are among the most important and sensitive Islamic rites as this can be diseovered by referring to news, sayings and practices of the Prophet, "and it has been decided that the purity, monotheism, Islam and Islamic worships shall be apparent and visible, because (showing them is a proof for the people of the east and the west..."(۳

Practically, they have been among the most important rites through history. Therefore, one cannot ignore

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.Ibid., p. ٢١۴ -١

Mu'jam al-Fiqh al-Hanbali, Part II, p. ۵٧۵, and also Al-Ibanah 'an Usul ad-Diyanah, p. -٢ .٢٣

.Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. ۵, p. ٣٧٢, saying ٩ -٣

or underestimate the issue of prayer leading only on the grounds that the prayer per se is a good and desirable thing. It is not acceptable to give the responsibility of religious rites, which indicate the social reality and presence, to someone who is not religiously or morally qualified for it. Religious rites themselves constitute part of the religion and are even among the most important parts of the religion. How can one who is the manifestation of unreligious values and ideals or is at least strange to them .lead them?(١) This is too evident to be argued

Apart from this, praying behind the prayer leader, at least in the first centuries, did not just mean performing a compulsory religious duty, be it daily or Friday prayers. It had further implications and it was these implications that were subject to more attention. According to the people of that time, the problem was not that such and such a person had performed their prayers by taking part in the communal prayer. More important than this, it meant recognizing the legality and governance of the imam whose (imamate had been approved through his taking part in the prayer.(٢

As we have already said, communal and Friday communal prayers symbolized the unity and consensus of the Muslims and also was the symbol of recognition of the ruler. This was the inevitable result of participating in these two prayers, which directly contributed to the approval, reinforcement and consolidation of the pillars of the ruling power. This

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This is an example of the religius alienation of the Umayyad caliphs and agents, - ۱ "Tariq was a governor for some Umayyad caliphs. I saw him ask for food, which he ate on the Prophet's (S) rostrum. There was a bone in his food that contained marrow. He hit it on the wood around the rostrum to take out the marrow." 'Uyun al-Akhbar, vol. ۲, p. ۴۶. When the governor of Medina behaves like this, what can one expect from ?the governors of the other regions

This participation not only meant recognizing the caliph or the ruler, it also means - ۲ recognizing all that related to him. For example, see the suggestion of the governor of .Medina to Sa'id ibn Musayyib in Waffiyat al-A'yan, vol. ۲, p. ۱۱۷

had nothing to do with the individual's intention, whether he wanted this or not. His deed in the context of that time had such an implication. When 'Abdullah bin 'Umar said, "Friday prayers are to be led by the one who is the victor in fighting his rivals."(۱), he mentioned this point. This was not only his words but also was the words of the .most of Muslims at that time

There is no argument about the foundations of this way of thinking, its dimensions and results. The purpose of mentioning all this was to show how the Sunni clerics think and why they think as they do. For example, Ibn Taymiyyah says in his well-known book As-Siyasat ash-Shar'iyyah, "There are two types of cooperation. Firstly, cooperation on goodness and piety, from jihad and applying the religious punishments to receiving religious dues and giving them to those who deserve it. .These are the things that were ordered by God and His Prophet

One who fails to do them fearing that he may be accomplice to tyrants has abandoned a compulsory religious duty on the illusion that he is a pious and abstinent person. There are so many occasions when fear and languor are confused with piety and abstinence because both are omission of actions. Secondly, it is cooperation between sin and enmity, like contributing in the killing of a respected person or taking away property or beating someone who does not deserve to be beaten, and the like. These are matters

.Al-Musannif, vol. ٢, no. ١۴٨ -١

(that have been forbidden by God and His Prophet."(١)

Most certainly, such a way of thinking, as we expressed in the case of the communal and Friday communal prayers, results from religious obligations on the one hand, and the undesirable and abnormal conditions in early Islamic centuries on the other hand, to which the Umayyads and the early 'Abbasid caliphs contributed greatly. The possible solution was the one they chose, i.e. removing justice as a condition in certain cases. For example, they could not ignore verses of the Qur'an that called the people to jihad and giving alms and religious tax. Therefore, they said that the important .thing was doing these, no matter under whose leadership and with what motivation

Nevertheless, these were subjects that received the attention of the rulers. They wanted to mobilize the people to go to wars that they called jihad as they wanted to get the religious dues of the people. It would not make sense to seek to stop or weaken such religious precepts. If they had, this would weaken their position or at least impede their ambitions. On the one hand, they took material benefit in implementing the precepts and, on the other hand, they took benefit of the intangible profits. Thus, they could call themselves the warriors of God. This would further add to (their popularity and contribute to the consolidation of their position.(٢

Nevertheless, it has to be mentioned that not considering justice as a valid condition for communal and Friday communal prayer leading

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.As-Siyasah ash-Shar'iyyah, p. ۴٢ -١

٢ - An example of this materialistic and profit-seeking attempt in the name of the religion can be found in the actions of the chancellor of the Sultan Sulayman Qanuni, Lutfi Pasha, who tried to promote the former's position to imamte or caliphate. In his book, Khulas al-Ummah fi Ma'rifah al-A'immah, he names Sulayman with such titles as 'imam of the time', 'God's Prophet's substitute', 'defender of Islam', 'powerful supporter of God's religion', 'sultan of Muslims', 'bridler of the infidels', 'just prayer

leader', 'establisher of the shari'ah laws', 'one with a characteristic of divine blessing and happiness and whom God accompanies with His infinite attention'. All of this indicates how the religion could be used for strengthening a worldly position. Majalleh-ye Daneshkadeh-ye Adabiyat wa 'Ulum-e Insani (Journal of the Faculty of Literature and Humanities), Mashhad University, serial no. ۲۵۷-۸, pp. ۷-۸.

contributed extensively to creating, reinforcing and stabilizing this way of thinking in its entirety. All of the people in all places dealt with these two religious duties on a daily basis and, these would include all the people in all the five daily prayer occasions. Apart from the fact that the prayers had a special position in religious terms and in the perception of the people, when the condition of justice was reduced to such a low level, it would naturally be lowered to a similar level in other affairs as well and this would not surprise anyone or make anyone raise an objection. Basically, a new religious thought that was in harmony with some new principles and rules was founded.

When Qattadah asked Sa'id ibn Musayyib, who was a great pious Follower and had undergone the severest forms of torture as ordered by 'Abdu'l-Malik on several occasions because of insisting on his opinion—that it is not possible to swear allegiance to two caliphs at the same time while 'Abdu'l-Malik wanted to get allegiance for his two sons Walid and Sulayman(۱)— "Should we pray behind Hajjaj ibn Yusuf?", he said in response, "We pray behind one who is far worse than him."(۲) This was also true about the Companions and the Followers in general as 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar prayed behind Hajjaj and Najdah, who were heads of the Rebels.(۳) Indeed in those days the Shi'ites and even their seniors would participate in these prayers;(۴) but, as it has already been mentioned,

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۱- Al-Islam bayn al-'Ulama' wa'l-Hakimun, pp. ۱۳۳-۸.

۲- Al-Mahalli, vol. ۴, p. ۲۱۴.

۳- Fiqh as-Sunnah, vol. ۱, pp. ۲۰۹-۱۰.

۴- Al-Mahalli, vol. ۴, p. ۲۱۴.

this was because of certain reasons and not because they believed that justice was .not a qualification for the communal and Friday communal prayer leader

This is one of the most important and sensitive diverging points of the Shi'ite and Sunni jurisprudential and theological systems and, subsequently, of their sociopsychological structures and political and historical developments. From the early days of its development, the Shi'ite ideology was formed and developed outside the limits of the recognized conditions of those days and the resulting necessities. Thus, justice in its jurisprudential framework played a far deeper and more extensive role than its theological concept in the way it formed the two branches of Islam differently. The historical, religious and sociopolitical developments of the two branches cannot be properly studied and analyzed without considering this point as one would not be able to recognize and evaluate their different limitations and .potentials in forming the future developments

Thus, justice maintained its position in the Shi'ite jurisprudential and theological system despite Sunnis although Shi'ites in practice rarely could realize the justice in the society the way they believed in it. Yet, they were constantly sensitive to it and at least thought of it as an ideal. The fact is that such a current cannot be seen among Sunnis. If there is such a current, it is mainly due to their Shi'ite tendencies in certain parts of the history.(۱)

Ali al-Wardi explains this very well, "Shi'ism is right now like a dormant volcano. Its' difference with the other mountains

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۱ - Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. ۵, p. ۳۸۳, saying ۹. This point is emphasized in Mustadrak Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. ۶, p. ۴۵۶, and Al-'Awasim min al-Qawasim, vol. ۳, pp. ۲۴۲-۴, .which elaborately cite Sunni documents

is just in the smoke that comes out of it. However, a dormant volcano, despite its apparent calm, is not without danger. It differs from the other mountains in that it has

melting fire within it that no one knows when will explode.” Then he adds, “The Twelver Shi‘ite beliefs were so that they were not stopped from criticizing and opposing the rulers in any period of their long history. They believed that any government is tyrannical, a usurper and unacceptable, unless its power is given to a .just infallible imam from among the children of ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib

Accordingly, Shi‘ites were like a constant revolution that would never calm down or stop fighting. They compared any ruler with the rules of the infallible imamate the way they believed in it and, therefore, saw him as defective and a usurper. This belief from the very early periods of Islam to the present resulted in the growth and deepening of hostility between them and those in power and they were accused of being Zandaqah, apostates and heretics. They were deemed heterodox to the religion and to the government. Because of the intensive frequent pressures on them, they would .rather be known as Zandiqs and unbelievers instead of Shi‘ites ot heretics

Mu‘awiyah and his Umayyad descendants as well as the ‘Abbasid caliphs tried all the different methods of force, pressure and torture to eliminate them but failed to do so. Shi‘ism resisted all this and will resist in the future all

the tyrants that disrespect human rights and dignity.”(۱) This indeed has its own consequences, the most important of which is its conflict with what one would .interpret as stability, establishment and historical continuity

The acceptance of justice as a principle with the Shi‘ites entailed its own religious psychology and religious perception. Self-motivation, irritability, tendency of devotion and idealism among the Shi‘ites are indebted to this same principle. There were other factors also that helped shape such characteristics, the most important of which is the episode of ‘Ashura. However, the problem is that, in the Shi‘ite perception, this story is itself an exalted example of liberalism, love of justice and living bravely. Therefore, it approves of and even serves explaining, reinforcing and consolidating the same .idealistic concept

These set of factors resulted in the presentation of the ideal of justice as the most superior and the most motivating ideal throughout the Shi'ite history, and this will continue to be so. This is the natural result of believing in the ideology of Shi'ism. As long as this school exists and inspires its followers, gives them faith and affects their psychological structure and religious perception, such a characteristic will be in place. Although it may go into a dormancy state for a short or long period due to certain .reasons, it will never be put out or eliminated

Sunnis' failure to accept justice as a principle has shaped their religious psychology and perception differently. These two aspects, i.e. power and security and accepting ,the status quo

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.Min al-'Aqidah ila'th-Thawrah, vol. ۱, p. ۲۶ -۱

have developed with them in a way that the justice has retreated in their favor. Why was this ignored despite the explicit decrees relating to the communal and Friday communal prayer leaders in which justice, piety and religious belief were deemed necessary(۱)—decrees that were valuable to them. This was either ignored or depicted as unimportant. Was this because of any reason other than the need to accept the status quo and avoiding the consequences of objecting to it? Yes, their religious psychology and their religious perception were shaped on the axis of the concept of power and security, which competed with justice and made the latter .retreat

This current has special results, among which agreement of this spirit of religious perception with what we interpreted as stability, establishment and historical continuity is the most important. When the status quo had the minimum requirements for some legality that would deem disturbing it as illegal and at the same time there was not a higher legal ideal, no ideal would make the people move in order to reach it. The religious psychology and the religious perception of the people were not so as to .respond to such calls. Naturally, such stability and establishment would be attained

Indeed, this does not mean that history was necessarily so in the two realms of Shi'ism and Sunnism or it will be exactly so in the future. There were other factors, each of which played their own role in turn. The history of these two religious branches is

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Hashim Ma'ruf al-Husayni; Intifadat ash-Shi'ah 'ibar at-Tarikh, pp. ۱۰۸-۹, cited from -۱ 'Ali al-Wardi, Wu''az as-Salatin, well explains the reasons for the stability and survival .of Shi'ism despite many other religions; see ۱۰۹-۱۰

the outcome of the interaction of these factors. What was said was and will be undoubtedlyone of the most important and most critical factors. We say it will be so because these two characteristics are deeply rooted in the subconscious and psychological structure of the followers of these two sects due to the ideological structure and specific characteristics of the two ideologies. Therefore, as long as .these two have followers, these two currents will continue to exist

Duties of the Government

The second factor was the concept of government in old times. Contrary to what it is today, i.e. the government provides services, in the past it firstly provided security. Presently, the government is expected to provide services while in the past it was required to provide and guarantee security, internally and externally. This expectation was exactly affected by the expectation of the ancestors from the government and arose from the conditions of those times. In their view, the government was a system to protect the people's property, lives and family and its first duty was to deal with such affairs rather than, for example, providing such services as health, treatment, education, culture and healthy recreation or similar services. The modern-day developments changed the concept of the duties of the government, to consider .provision of security as one of its duties rather than the most important one

However, in the past, especially in the Islamic east, which lacked political stability and continuity, the situation was not this way. In those days, everything and all the values

ended in security. What was important was for the government to provide such security. This would be the greatest gift that a government could give to its citizens. However, if the issue is looked at not through today's view but according to the conditions in the past, the concern of the great Sunni jurisprudents and theologians in this respect will be understood, to the effect that everything can be obtained in the light of such security, from religious rites and orders to the protection of the people's property, lives and family. In their view, the government both protected the religion and the people. Therefore, it had to provide for their good in this world and in the .afterworld

Sunni scholars in general, who have written about imamate and caliphate, or have dealt with the same, considered the first and the most important duty of the government to be providing security. Even some of them chose this duty as a definition, from a cautious Sufi-type individual like Ghazali(۱) to a strict fanatic like Ibn Taymiyyah(۲) and from a political scholar and politician like Mawardi(۳) to a thoughtful intellectual like Ibn Khaldun.(۴) All of them lived in conditions that made them sensitive .to such concerns, which was natural

You would ask why the story did not end up so with Shi'ites, i.e. why the great Shi'ite theologians and jurisprudents were not so sensitive about security and the protection of security while they also lived in the old times and closely witnessed the events and

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۱- For example, see Kanz al-'Ummal, vol. ۷, pp. ۵۹۱-۷.

۲- Al-Iqtisad fi'l-I'tiqad, pp. ۱۹۷-۲۰۶; ibid., Fatihah al-'Ulum, p. ۱۱.

۳- As-Siyasah ash-Shar'iyyah, p. ۲۳.

۴- Mawardi, Adab ad-Dunya' wa'd-Din, p. ۱۱۵.

developments. One has to say in response that their concern about security and protecting the lives and blood and reputation of the Muslims was and is not at all less than that of the Sunni clerics. However, that they did not forget about justice despite

such sensitivity and this principle was not overshadowed by security and their thoughts and beliefs were due to the practice of the imams and the special decrees that they had accepted, i.e. there was a special reason for this and, if it had not been there, like the Sunni clerics and under the influence of the conditions in the past and the expediency for protecting security and peace, they would have thought the same .way

Finally, the third factor would arise from the historical realities and necessities. Throughout the history of Islam, other than in certain periods, it was the Sunnis who had the power and were responsible for protecting the society and its borders. Shi'ites, i.e. the Twelver Shi'ites, were a small minority community and rarely had such a responsibility. Accordingly, it was natural that the Sunni political thought would be more strongly and more deeply influenced than the Shi'ite political thought by questions concerning the administration and protection of the society and guarding its internal and external security and providing the means for it. Their jurisprudence and theology flourished and expanded at a time when they inherited centuries of experience in statesmanship and protecting the foreign borders. However, the Shi'ite jurisprudence and theology had

not undergone such experiences when they were developing. The latter was based more on theoretical principles and foundations rather than on realities and practical .necessities

Islam was in constant conflict with fierce malicious domestic and foreign enemies. Such conflicts never stopped and are still going on. Basically, the geographical situation of the Muslim World from the very beginning was so that it exposed it to constant relentless attacks. The most important of these dangers came from the east, where the yellow race from Central Asia threatened the Muslim territory from the very early days. These threats continued long after the Mongol attack. The other attack was from the west, where the Christians and the Crusaders were, and continued to the early times of the present century in military form and still goes on in

(a different form.(۱

Vastness of the Muslim World

The vastness of the Muslim World and the various groups, cultures, races, nations and religions therein were yet another problem. No religion had so much variety within its territory and no religion has been able to create so much harmony, coherence and unity. This provided an appropriate ground for understanding Islam in different ways and, as a result, for creation of an unlimited number of sects and a great deal of religious, cultural and sociopolitical tensions. Consequently, from the very beginning of its appearance, this religion was in conflict with foreign aggressors on the one hand, and with the internal insurgents on the other. Because of its ,vastness, anyone could convert to it and, naturally

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.Ibn Khaldun, Introduction, p. ۱۸۰ -۱

it had a great potential for widely different interpretations and justifications. Any of these two could easily benefit from the internal groups who had different thoughts and generally fought, killed and plundered each other in order to create tension and .insecurity or at least contribute thereto

It would be appropriate here to quote part of the views of Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, as quoted by Muhammad Abu Zuhrah, about the causes of sectarianism in Iraq, which is an example of Muslim sectarianism throughout history, and why it was so, "Iraq was home to all Islamic sects because it was the point where all ancient civilizations met. There, one could find the sciences of the Iranians and those of the Chaldeans and the remains of the cultures and civilizations of these nations, merged with Greek philosophy and Indian thoughts, while all of them had been mixed with Islamic .thoughts

Therefore, this land became the birthplace and growing center for various Islamic sects. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid thus explains why different sects were formed in Iraq,

“Concerning the difference of this people with the Arabs of the Prophet’s (S) time, I have found out that all of these are from Iraq and reside in Kufah. The Iraqi nature is so that it constantly fosters the believers of various sects and new religions. The people of this land have insight and are interested in discussions and contemplating different issues while they have views and beliefs similar to objectors to religions. People like Mani, Disan, Mazdak and the like

p: ۲۴۵

were from among them, who appeared at the time of the Sassanid kings. The Hijazi nature and thought are not like this.”(۱)

The words of Ibn Abi’l-Hadid were true about Iraq as well as about many other places. The same causes that created various sects in Iraq or at least contributed to their growth and development existed in the other Islamic lands as well. It was the destiny that this religion extend to lands that were the cradles of ancient cultures and civilizations.

In such circumstances, one can expect that they [the Sunnis] would not think about anything other than security and power that can bring it about. The history of Islam is full of such problems. Apart from all the foreign dangers, one of which was the Mongol invasion that destroyed the Islamic east, Islam was throughout its history involved in constant malicious conflict with Christianity in the western front. If there were intervals in the meanwhile, it was for refreshing the forces rather than for stopping the conflicts permanently. Christianity and the medieval church considered Islam to be a usurping enemy, one that had invaded part of its territory and had risen against its authenticity and truth. Although Muslims followed their teachings to consider Christians as People of the Book, the fact is that the Christians, other than in the present century when they recognized Islam as a religion, considered Muslims as unbelievers(۲) that had to be destroyed.

Threat of Christian Powers

An example of Ha’iri’s account of the Christians’ view of Muslims, quoting from

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Concerning the historical rivalry of Muslims and Christians and its reflections in their -۱ religious understanding of each other and its continuation to the present, see the critique of The Satanic Verses and especially The Legacy of Islam, pp. ۹-۶۲. To find out about the perception of the Christians about continuation of this historical tension and their critical attitude towards the Muslim perception in this regard, see Yayambar wa Fer'un (the Phrophet and Pharaoh), pp. ۱۸۵-۲۰۲, Islam dar Jahan-e Mu'asir (Islam in .the Contemporary World), pp. ۱۰۶-۲۰

.Muhammad Abu Zuhrah, Al-Imam Zayd, pp. ۱۰۸-۹ -۲

Sanders, "You could hardly find a Christian with honesty in the period of belief that would consider the Prophet (S) impartially as his religion, in his view, was an infidel caricature of the Christian's own religion and its followers—from the first to the seventh century, when the Muslims took Syria from the Byzantine government—had (destroyed Christianity in its birthplace where it had grown."(۱

Then, he adds, "Thus, the Christian World, i.e. Europe, looked at Islam and, therefore, they always considered the Prophet of Islam and his religion and followers as enemies and cursed at them, so much so that Pike, in a book that he wrote about the Prophet's life, admits that Muhammad is one of the great men that has been subject (to accusations more than any other famous man."(۲

As we said, the Christians' hostility never stopped. They were the permanent organized ideological enemies of Muslims. Their attacks were contrary to that of the eastern invaders, who were general idolaters and whose attacks were for slaughter and plundering and for finding pastures and occupying developed and residential lands. The latter would finally merge into the Muslim society by converting to Islam while the Christians' attacks were preplanned and ideological. Not only would they not accept Islam, they were also seeking to Christianize the Muslims. The purpose of the eastern invaders was slaughter and destruction while the western invaders sought to .destroy Islam and the centrality of Islam

To the leadership of the Roman Catholic Church and the European governments, the "fall

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۱- As Christians, at least in the past, did not recognize Islam, they considered Muslims as infidels and, naturally, the latter lacked any right, religious or nonreligious, in their territory. A Christian turned Muslim from Andalusia, thus writes in his books, "One of the Muslims of the city of Nabunia had to hide his Muslim beliefs in order to protect his life and to be able to continue his life in his homeland. He became a pastor and called himself Nicola Martil." Majalleh-ye Daneshkadeh-ye Adabiyat wa 'Ulum-e Insani (Journal of the Faculty of Literature and Humanities, Mashhad University), serial no. ۵۷-۸, p. ۹. Although Christianity did not recognize Islam as a religion at least until after the ۲nd Christian Assembly in mid-۶۰'s of the present century, it still has some very hostile criticisms. For example, see Joseph Craft's articles in Washington Post, ۱۹ May ۱۹۸۱, entitled, "Who Wanted to Assassinate the Pope?", and also The Conciliar and Post-Consiliar Documents, pp. ۷۳۸-۴۲, Diya'uddin Sardar, Islamic Futures, John Loffin, The Dagger of Islam. To find out about the causes of this hostility, see Daniel, Islam and the West: The Making of an Image, pp. ۱-۱۴.

۲- The same journal, no. ۵۶, p. ۷۵۳.

of Granada did not just mean the defeat of Abu 'Abdullah, the last Muslim ruler of the Granadan Nasiris, against the united forces of Ferdinand and Isabella. It also meant an unforgettable victory for the Christian World against Islam and, as Sanders puts it, the Granada event was 'an uncompleted partial avenge by Christianity' against Islam. Europe, which was constantly worried about and feared the unity of the Muslims and the material and spiritual progresses of the Muslim World—which had extended after the Muslims took control of Constantinople—celebrated the fall of Granada and expressed much happiness for the defeat of the Muslims while, as Bartold writes, the fall of Granada was 'like a bomb exploding in the Muslim World', making all the Muslims mourn on it. The leaders of the Roman Catholic Church arranged feasts, dances and celebrations in Rome and the Vatican for the event.

In his book Jam-Sultan, a French writer writes that, after the news of the Granada fall spread, the Vatican and the other places in Rome were lit for celebrations, there were plays and horseracing and bullfighting competitions for consecutive days. In one of the plays, two people dressed as Ferdinand and Isabella, while another man playing the role of Abu 'Abdullah, the defeated Muslim ruler, was chained and fell to their feet. The people were joyous for the king and queen of Spain, who had finally been united .to defeat the Islamic rulers of Granada after years of being defeated by them

Among the first-hand spectators

p: ۲۴۸

or audience, there was the same Jam, the brother of Bayazid II, the Ottoman Sultan, who was held by the Pope's government in order to make the Ottoman sultan behave himself. According to the French writer, more than anything else the prince disliked the chaining play of Abu 'Abdullah and throwing him at the feet of Ferdinand and Isabella. It seems that the Vatican Catholic leaders held such plays, feasts and celebrations to show that the Muslims were in bad conditions and were disunited, especially in the presence and with the awareness of Jam Sultan, who contemplated having the crown of the greatest Islamic government of that time. They thus sought :to quench their sense of avenge and

Say to the Christian World that, despite the past, Islam was now powerless against (۱ .the West and Christianity had overcome Islam

Severely break the spirit of the Muslims and Muslim rulers, especially the Ottoman (۲ (kings who claimed to conquer the world."(۱

Power and Security

In such conditions, it was natural that the thoughts and sensitivity to security and power be directed towards the creater and protector of security rather than to justice or the practice of justice. What mattered here was merely having power and splendor because these would frighten the enemies and protect the centrality and borders of Islam. Therefore, everything would have to be put at the service of making the ruler

as powerful and splendid as possible. This is the duty of all and it is a religious and Islamic duty

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.Ibid., p. ۷۵۳ -۱

because, in their view, defending Islam was so intermingled with defending the ruler that it was not possible to defend the religion without defending the ruler. To them, it was not important who he was and what he did and how far he was committed to the religious precepts and Islamic justice. What was important was that he symbolized Islam and everybody had to be at his service and obey him in order to consolidate his position as much as possible because it is the power and splendor of this symbol that silences the enemies, frightens the aliens and establishes security.(۱)

This is well explained by Ibn Hanbal where he is accounting for the religious necessity of obeying the rulers, "It is obligatory to obey the rulers and commander of the faithful, be he a good or bad person. It is necessary to obey the one who has become the caliph and the people gather to express their allegiance and also the one who has gained domination over the people with the power of the sword and by force and is known as caliph and commander of the faithful. Jihad by the side of the emirs, whether they are good or bad, is acceptable untill the Day of Resurrection.

The decisions they make like the distribution of spoils and tributes and on punishments is acceptable. No one should be sarcastic towards them or stand up against them. It is allowed and rewarded if you pay them alms, whether they are good

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.The same journal, nos. ۵۷-۸, pp. ۱۰-۱۱ -۱

or bad. Standing behind them for prayer and behind any other person who is qualified is acceptable and one who refuses to do this is a heretic and a violator of the tradition

of the ancestors. One who does not believe that standing behind good or bad emirs to say the Friday communal prayer is accepted, has not understood the true virtues of the Friday communal prayer.

The tradition is that two units of prayer have to be said with them and you have to believe that this prayer is complete and should not doubt it. One who disobeys an imam of the Muslims whom the people have accepted and whose caliphate the people have accepted, whether with satisfaction or with force or reluctance, has broken the customs of the Muslims and opposed the Prophet's tradition and, if he dies, it is as if he has died in the pre-Islamic ignorance period."(١)

The Muslims in the past centuries lived under such conditions and this was true especially in the first centuries of Islam when the seed of Sunni jurisprudential and theological structure and thoughts was planted. These foundations developed in the light of such conditions and necessities. Indeed, this was approved by the experiences of the subsequent centuries. Hajjaj ibn Yusuf says, "The sultan's weakness is more damaging than his oppression because his weakness affects everybody whereas his oppression affects a certain group."(٢) This indicates the true spirit of that time and the mentality and sensitivity of the people of that

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١ - The fact is that the caliph's or sultan's ability to create domestic security and especially to protect the borders was so important in the past that many Sunni clerics were made to support him as a religious duty because, to them, this ability and splendor means the strength and splendor of Islam and of Muslims and the best deterrent against the foreigners and infidels against the Muslim territory. The individual position of Harun ar-Rashid, both in his time and in the following periods, despite all his oppressiveness and corruptuion, some of which is reflected in the One Thousand and One Nights stories, was mainly for the same reason. To many Sunni clerics, he symbolized power, grandeur and splendor of Muslims, and was therefore respected and popular. He was one who could stand powerfully against the Roman Emperor and make the latter obey him. The following is an example. In ١٨٧ A.H., the

Roman Empire wrote him a letter and canceled the peace treaty between them. Ths treaty had been made by the previous emperor, who was actually a woman. The Roman Emperor wrote, "In the previous treaty, which was due to weakness and stupidity of my predecessor, you were given properties which you have to return upon receiving the letter or have to prepare yourself for war. When Harun read the letter, he got so angry that no one dared to look at his face let alone talk to him. He asked for a scribe to write overleaf the letter, "In the Name of God, the Beneficient, the Merciful. From Harun ar-Rashid to Nacnur, the Roman Dog! O' you the son of an infidel woman, I read your letter. The response to that is what you will see not what you will hear." The same day, he rushed towards Rome, defeated the Emperor in a fierce battle and specified a tribute for him to pay. Tarikh al-Khulafa', p. ۲۸۸. Concerning his good characteristics and even virtues, which indicate an example of the great clerics' perception of him, see ibid., pp. ۲۸۳-۹۷. It has also been cited that, "One day, he was reading the Qur'an. He got to the verse, 'Is the Egyption land not mine? Are these streams not flowing under my feet? Do you not see?' He said, 'Curse on this mean person who claims to be a god because of having Egpyt's kingdom. I give the Egyption kindom to the one who is the most inferior of my servants.' He then asked for Khasib, who was his bathman and appointed him as the governor of Egypt. He ordered a charter to be written for that and dispatched him to Egypt. Khasib ran that state and was proud of it..." Ighrad aa-Siyasah fi I'rad ar-Riyasah, p. ۳۲۰. Interestingly, the author of this book considers this as Harun's magnanimity. This way of thinking has a long history and was deeply influential.

Al-A'immah al-Arba'ah, vol. ۴, p. ۱۱۹ -۲.

time. It was an example for later times and the emirs advised their children about them.

In those times, it was possible to make one of the two choices, either accepting anarchy, insecurity and foreign threats or submitting to the oppression of the ruler and his deviation from the right path of Islam and Islamic justice. In such conditions, naturally all the people would choose the latter.

As Ghazali sought to prove the religious rather than the rational necessity of imamate, he says things that are a clear expression of the problems that were mentioned and of the necessities arising therefrom, "…And as to the second introduction: It is that the world affairs and the security of the souls and of property is not provided, unless under a powerful obeyed sultan. The best reason for this is when a sultan or caliph dies, that if he is not immediately substituted by another obeyed king, there will be anarchy, murder, plunder and drought everywhere. The beasts will die and the industries will be stopped. The powerful will steal and plunder and no one will have rest so as to worship or seek knowledge, if he survives the situation, and most people will be killed.

Therefore, it has been said that the religion and the sultan are together. The religion is the foundation and the sultan is its guard. What has no foundation will be destroyed and what had no guard will be ruined. In brief, any reasonable person will notice that the people

will be destroyed if they are left to themselves, because of their class difference and conflicting views, and there being no powerful obeyed person to gather them together.

This disease has no cure other than a powerful sultan to maintain the worldly system, and the maintenance of the worldly system is necessary for establishing a religious system, and the religious system is necessary for the otherworldly salvation, which is what the prophets meant. Therefore, the necessity of having an imam is an inevitable religious necessity. Understand this very well."(۱)

It is interesting that the well-known theologian, Qadi 'Abdu'r-Rahman bin Ahmad Ayji mentions the same point. As the second reason for the necessity of appointing an imam, he mentions preventing probable damage. Explaining this, he says, "With a relative certainty, we know that the shari'ah legislator, while legislating the religious rites on the days of feast and Fridays, meant to provide for benefits for the people in this world or in the afterworld. These benefits will not be attained other than by

having an imam appointed according to the shari'ah so as to be referred to in what relates to him because the people, with their differing views and their conflicts, rarely submit to each other.

This would result in fights and perhaps the death of all. This has been shown by experience and also by disturbances that happen in the interval between the death of a sultan and the appointment of another individual because, if this appointment is delayed, the daily

p: ۲۵۳

۱- Ighrad as-Siyasah fi I'rad ar-Riyasah, p. ۲۸۵.

life will be stopped and everyone will take a sword to protect his life and property. This will result in the destruction of the religion and of all the Muslims."(۱)

We quoted the above in full because of its importance in the entire discussion. However, despite all this, the big problem was that the second choice, i.e. submitting to an oppressor despite his deviation from the right path of Islam and from the Islamic justice, which was due to necessity, resulted in the establishment of a tyrannical sociopsychological structure among them and formed the foundations of their thoughts accordingly in all respects. This temporary necessity had a lasting effect, which continued to the present day and aroused a great deal of protests by the youth and the intellectuals of the new generation."(۲)

Preserving the System

All of these factors finally constituted the thought of preserving the system and the need to do so. The question was to preserve the system. This had the first priority. The other factors were either in its employment or had a peripheral or secondary importance. Such a way of thinking would certainly nip any objection in the bud on grounds of justice, either by claiming to return to the Prophet's (S) tradition or by claiming to confront heresy. From this point of view, the question is not what the truth is and what the falsehood is. The principle is that all people have to serve to protect

.and preserve it and to consolidate and reinforce it as much as possible

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.Al-Iqtisad fi'l-I'tiqad, pp. ۱۹۸-۹ -۱

.Al-Mawaqif fi 'Ilm al-Kalam, pp. ۳۹۶-۷ -۲

Anything other than this would be violating the customs of the Muslims and prohibited, and persistence on that would be deemed as rejection of the religion. Accordingly, the greatest protest that one could have would be an objection in one's heart and a personal one, i.e. one must not accept a ruler's heresy by heart, yet objecting to it would be violating the customs of the Muslims and one has to avoid doing so. One's duty is, at the ultimate point, a denial by heart not in action or practice. .The following story explains this very well

One day, the jurisprudents of Baghdad went to Ibn Hanbal and said to him, "This person—they meant Wathiq, the 'Abbasid caliphate, who, like Ma'mun and Mu'tasim, promoted the issue of the creation of the Qur'an—has corrupted the people's beliefs and does not stop on this. It is necessary to do something." They meant to get a fatwa for rising against the caliph. However, he said in response, "Your duty is to deny in your hearts. You have to deny him in your heart but are not allowed to rise against (him or oppose him."(۱

Ibn Hanbal did not say this because he sought comfort or he was conservative. He champions the period of hardship, to be later known as the Days of Hardship. He is one of the most prominent opponents of the thought of the creation of the Qur'an and insisted so much on this that he was defamed and beaten for it. In

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For example, see the explicit critiques of Mustafa Shukri in Payambar wa Fir'un -۱ (The Prophet and the Pharaoh), pp. ۸۷-۹۰ and, still better, see the more scholarly and principal critiques of Hasan Hanafi in the introduction to Min al-'Aqidah ila'th-Thawrah, vol. ۱, especially pp. ۲۰-۳۲.

Mu‘tasim’s period, he was lashed nearly to death. He was not afraid or did not seek personal comfort. He really thought so and recommended that too.(۱)

However, the question why he thinks so returns to his jurisprudential and theological foundations, as were mentioned. He believed that even if the imamate and caliphate is attained by force and sword, one is not allowed to oppose it thereafter. When the ruling system and the protection of the ruling system are made a principle, the person who takes it and the qualifications he has to have are overshadowed thereby. The principle is solidity and power rather than conforming the religious precepts or justice. It is this principle that makes it legal and necessary to be obeyed rather than its characteristics. Because of this, even a caliph that believes in the creation of the Qur’an and promotes this has to be obeyed because they believed that the negative results and consequences of opposing the ruling system are far more than the positive results that may result in ‘calling to goodness’ or ‘prohibiting the evil’ in words and in practice. Therefore, one must not do it. Although this is a true saying, if its limits are not defined and it is considered to be true in any circumstances, it would provide the best ground for the rule of oppression and deviation from the religion and justice, as this happened.(۲)

It was exactly on this basis that he said they should not make any objection to Wathiq or

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۱- Abu Ya‘la, Al-Ahkam as-Sultaniyyah, p. ۲۱; Al-Khilafah wa’l-Imamah, p. ۳۰۰.

۲- Concerning the Days of Hardship [Ayyam al-Mihnah] and the hard conditions that Ibn Hanbal and his fellow-theologians underwent, see Al-A’immah al-Arba‘ah, ۴, pp. ۱۴۰-۸۰, Al-Khilafah wa’l-Imamah, pp. ۳۰۰-۹, and still better, the readable chapter ‘Clerics and the Pains they Suffered from the Rulers’ in Al-Islam bayn al-‘Ulama’ wa’l-Hakimun, pp. ۱۲۹-۲۱۴, and Manaqib al-Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal by Ibn al-Jawzi, pp. ۳۹۷-۴۲۰.

take any action against him. It was again based on this he did not call Mu‘tasim, the

powerful and strict and at the same time uninformed and unlearned ‘Abbasid caliph, by any title other than caliph and the Commander of the Faithful, even when he underwent the severest forms of torture.(۱)

These were the most important factors that formed the mentality of the senior Sunni clerics regarding security and protecting the ruling system, from among of which the third factor was the most effective and critical. This was one of the major differences between Shi‘ites and Sunnis. One of the most important reasons why Shi‘ah has been criticized and even blamed throughout history has been this last factor. They constantly said and say that Shi‘ah, with what they did, has broken the Muslim unity and created differences and disputes. Some even criticize Imam Husayn with this same reason and explicitly ask why he stood against the consensus of the Muslims.(۲)

Here the problem is not whether this criticism of theirs is right or not, i.e. whether Imam broke the Muslim unity or whether there was another issue. What is important is that this criticism is the product of their intellectual and doctrinal system. Commitment to such a system will necessarily take one to such views as they have adopted. The critics of the Imam thought so and those that did not say anything, were under the influence of the special sayings regarding the Imam, which were also cited by great Sunni sayings

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۱- If the preservation of the system, in fact the ruling system, is the only criteria for judging the good and corrupt things, deviation from the religion and justice with that excuse may go so far as to result in disrespecting the Prophet’s daughter, “Fatimah’s house was violated. She was disrespected in order for the ruling Islamic system to be preserved, for the caliphate not to be dispersed, to prevent some Muslims from disobeying the caliph and to disrupt the Muslims’ unity.” Ibn Abi’l-Hadid, The Description, ۲۰, p. ۱۶... Other examples can be found in the following pages of this book. Concerning the criticism of the caliphs who believed in creating the Qur’an, see Al-‘Awasim min al-Qawasim, pp. ۲۴۹-۵۱.

۲- Al-Khilafah wa’l-Imamah, p. ۳۰۱.

scholars. That is to say, from among the prohibition of breaking the Muslim unity, which was a natural and logical result of their intellectual, ideological and jurisprudential system, and the sayings that were cited as to the high position of the Imam, they resorted to the sayings. Their silence and probably admiration was due to this rather than due to the agreement of the ‘Ashura uprising with their jurisprudential and theological foundations—here we are talking about the true independent Sunni scholars rather than the ones who were affiliates of tyrants and would give up their religion in order to justify the purposes and actions of those in power. These would say anything even at the price of insulting a person like Imam .Husayn

Ibn Qayyim’s Theory

It would be better here to cite the theory of one of the greatest Sunni scholars, Ibn Qayyim. In his most important and serious book A‘lam al-Muwaqqi‘in, he has a full chapter on “Change and difference of fatwa depending on change of time, place, conditions, intentions and results”, in which he provides a detailed account on that “The shari‘ah has been constructed for the people’s benefits in the worldly and the ”.otherworldly affairs

Then, he provides the degrees of prohibiting the evil and its conditions, saying on the latter, “The Prophet necessitated prohibiting the evil so that what God and his Prophet like will prevail. Then, if prohibition of the evil involves another evil which is disliked by God and his Prophet, it will not be allowed, although

that evil is not liked by God and He will punish those who commit it. It is like prohibiting the sultan or the governor from evil by rising up against him, as this will be the basis for any disturbance and evil to the end of time. The Prophet’s Companions asked him about fighting emirs who delay saying prayers on time, and if they should fight them. ’.He said, ‘No, not as long as they say it

One who sees something from his emir that he dislikes, he has to be patient‘

regarding it and must not refuse to obey him.' One who contemplates small and big damages that occurred to Islam will see that it has been due to non-commitment to this principle and impatience on the evil. They sought to eliminate an evil but were entangled in a bigger evil, which was the result of their action. The Prophet saw the greatest of evils in Mecca but he could not change them. When God opened Mecca to him and made it the home of Islam, he began changing the Ka'bah and made it the way Abraham had built as the Qurayshis could not bear it since they had just converted to Islam and left paganism. Therefore, the Prophet did not let the Muslims stand up against the emirs and prohibit the evil in practice as a great disturbance would arise out of it."(۱)

Seeking Justice and Ambition of Power

The important thing here is that these two different types of attitudes and interpretations will entail

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۱- Yazid and the corrupt clerics of his court and the descendants of the two in later periods accused Imam Husayn and his companions of having 'desterted the religion and risen up to oppose the imam and caliph. Therefore, they had to be fought against and eliminated.' See Tarikh Tabari (Tabari's History), p. ۳۴۲.

absolutely different consequences. The historical experiences of Shi'ites and Sunnis and their present conditions are mainly affected by these two types of consequences rather than by the two types of attitudes and interpretations.

One of the most important differences of these types is that the Sunni revolutionary potential in the contemporary time had an 'ambition for power' rather than 'seeking justice' the way it is within the Shi'ite world.(۱) The biggest motivation and rather sensitivity and worry of revolutionary Shi'ites at present are their seeking justice. The important characteristic of their Islamic political ideology, which is the source of their inspiration and mobility, is their seeking justice.

They have risen to establish justice, i.e. they have risen to establish an Islam whose main message is justice and the establishment of justice while the goal of the Sunni Islamic movements in general is mainly creating a powerful grand centrality. They are looking for the power and splendor of Islam like the early periods and want the Muslims to have a power like in the past. Their ideal is powerful caliphs of the early period. To them, Islam is the religion of power in the first place and its history is one of power and majesty. Shi'ites, at least contemporary Shi'ites, see Islam as the religion of justice in the first place and deem its true history to be one of justice and .administration of justice

For example, in the Shi'ite view, the most important distinguishing feature of 'Ali's character is his

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.A'lam al-Mawqi'in, vol. ۳, pp. ۳-۴ -۱

appreciation of equality, justice and justice administration. The former see bright grand faces among the powerful Islamic caliphs, who ruled over the greatest empire of that time while the later find manifestations of justice and equality in the true caliphs, who lived like the most ordinary people and did not bow other than to the (religion and justice.(۱

It is exactly because of this that the internal developments after the Islamic Revolution of Iran, especially after the committed revolutionaries took control of the power, have to be studied based on their concerns about enforcement of justice and social justice. The most important factor that formed the ups and downs in Iran in the meanwhile was exactly this. The other factors were secondary. However, if such a revolution had occurred in a Sunni country, the critical sensitivities and factors would certainly not have been so and, most probably, they would have thought of making the revolution as powerful as possible. The natural result of it would have been its further ability in achieving social integrity and absorbing those that had different (thoughts in order to create a powerful centrality.(۲

From among the other important consequences of this different attitude towards security and justice is that, throughout the history, Sunni Islamic movements were generally religious or cultural and one hardly sees any political movement while in the Shi‘ite world, political movements even during the rule of Shi‘ite sultans are abundant as there were the necessary theoretical foundations for rising up against the ruler. ,Therefore

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.For example, see India and Pakistan, pp. ۳۷ and ۳۸ -۱

For example, see the well-known magniloquent speech of Rashid Rida in approving -۲ the caliphate of Sharif Husayn in Menna in Thawrah al-‘Arab didd al-Atrak, pp. ۳۲۰-۶, and words of Sharid Husayn at the end of Rashid Rida’s speech, ibid., p. ۳۴۲, and also the introduction by Muhibb ad-Din Khatib to Al-‘Awasim min al-Qawasim, where he praises even the Umayyad caliphs because they expanded the territory of Islam with .their power (p. ۳). Also see Khasar al-‘Alam bi Inhitat al-Muslimin, pp. ۲۹۹-۳۱۹

they were more likely to occur than where there were no such principles and such actions would be deemed illegal as causes of the order established by the ruling .system

The fact that Sunni Islamic movements in general have been religious and cultural is not because of their lack of theoretical sociopolitical foundations. In the absence of a sociopolitical channel which is both religiously acceptable and can contain and guide the revolutionary potential of the people, a tendency towards change, development and reform shall be naturally contained within the religious and cultural channel while the Shi‘ites did not have such a problem. It was likely for this potential to be put through its religiously acceptable channel, be it social or political or any other military or armed form. There was no problem in this regard. Therefore, a revolutionary potential could easily be led through its natural channel. However, this was not the .case with Sunnis

The outlets of public anger had been blocked and one could not rise up against the ruler, its oppressions and heresies. Consequently, all of these were manifested in the form of fighting heresy, religious deviation and intellectual problems so far as it does not relate to the ruler. One day in the form of fighting the Mu'tazilites, while the other day in the form of fighting Shi'ism, Sufism, the philosophy and the next day in the form of fighting any of the four religious branches and the jurisprudential and theologian schools and sometimes in the form

p: ۲۶۲

of confronting the people and their beliefs claiming that they do things that are not acceptable to a certain religiously dogmatic and backward group, whereas they have adopted polytheistic tendencies and shedding their blood is allowed.(۱)

From this historical point of view, this has been one of the important causes of the endless internal conflicts of the Muslims throughout history. Despite the many common points among the various sects of Islam, which is due to the firm, clear and explicit principles and the infinite capacity of Islam itself, the history of Islam is still full of bloody confrontations between the sects. A great part of this indeed is due to the social, political, tribal and racial factors. However, it should not be ignored that lack of an appropriate and religiously acceptable channel through which one can benefit from the revolutionary potential of the people for sociopolitical reforms was itself a factor for the deviation of this accumulated and at the same time natural force. When this force was deprived of an appropriate and religiously acceptable means to achieve its goals, it will naturally use channels and means that are acceptable to it and, instead of dedicating its force directly towards the ruling system, it will confront its brothers with various excuses.(۲)

This is especially more important in a religion such as Islam. Islam, more than any other religion, is capable of mobilizing its hidden forces for promoting its objectives. The other religions more or less dedicate their manpower to individual salvation. It

p: ۲۶۳

١ – One of the best examples is the letter of Zaynab al-Ghazali, the well-known Egyptian writer to Yasir ‘Arafat when the centers of the Palestinian Liberation Organization in Tunisia were bombarded by Israeli airplanes.

٢ – There is a long bloody history for religious dreams in Islam, in which the Hanbalits had the greatest share—exactly because of their fanatic populist beliefs and the strict and repellant psychology that is the outcome of such beliefs—so far that even the Ash‘arites, who are well-known for fanaticism and strict attitude, have complained of their fanaticism, dogmatism, atrocity and mischief. For example, a group of Ash‘arite clerics in the time of Khwajah Nizamu’l-Mulk wrote him a letter in support of the head of the Ash‘arites of their time, ‘Abu’l-Qasim Qushayri, in which they complained of what the Hanbalits did and asked for his effective support. It is interesting to know that they wrote the letter at a time when the Ash‘arites and the Shafi‘ites were in the peak of their power. This shows the amount of pressure that the Hanbalites exerted on non- Hanbalites and one can imagine how hard they pressued the other sects, “…A group of rabbles who call themselves Hanbalites committed disgusting heresies in Baghdad which no apostate, let alone monotheist, would let himself do. They disrespected the imams of the past and abused the followrs of truth and the religious people in mosques, circles and bazaars…” Al-Milal wa’n-Nihal, Subhani, pp. ٢٧٩-٨٢. One can find numerous stories in Tabaqat al-Hanabilah, which the Hanbalites themselves wrote as biographies of their great clerics. The following story is an example of the disturbances they made, “In the second trip of Tabari from Tabaristan to Baghdad, one Friday, in the congregation mosque, the Hanbalites asked his view about Ahmad Hanbal and the story of God sitting in heaven. He responded that Ahmad Hanbal’s opposition did not count. They said that the clerics consider him in the disputes. Tabari said, ‘I neither saw him or any story about him nor any of his trustable companions. The story of God’s sitting in the heaven is an impossible thing.’” “When the Hanbalites and Traditionists heard this, they attacked him and threw their inkwells at him. Tabari took refuge in his house. The Hanbalites, of whom there were thousands, stoned his house so that a great pile of stone was made in front of his house. Nazuk, the police chief of Baghdad with thousands of police arrived and rescued Tabari from the mob, while staying there for one day and ordered for the stones to be taken away.” The Wahhabis, p. ٢٧. Also see the pain that ‘Izz ibn ‘Abdu’s-Salam, one of the greatest ٧th-

century clerics suffered from the Hanbalites. Al-Islam bayn al-'Ulama' wa'l-Hakimun, .p. ۱۹۲

is not so in Islam. Yet, its difference with the other religions is that this individual salvation will be attained in the light of social action, any action that is dedicated to the .promotion of the objectives of this religion

The final purpose is for this religion to achieve its social objectives. Man will be happy if he puts himself at the service of realizing such a goal and ideal. It is because of this that this religion has been and is better able than the other religions to realize hidden individual talents and benefit from them for its sociopolitical progress. Therefore, a Muslim wishes to make maximum use of his power in order to promote his religion and to devote himself to this cause as much as possible, as this would finally result in his salvation. In other religions, this salvation is attained with a sort of practice on one's soul or by individual or probably collective actions. However, in this religion, this salvation is attained mainly through individual or collective actions that somehow contribute to the promotion of the objectives. In the meanwhile, the important thing is that Islam has the ability and power to improve the internal forces of a Muslim, develop his sense of devotion and apply all of these forces.(۱) Further discussion is .needed to better clarify this issue

Seeking Devotion

It is principally an important human feature to be affected and attracted by something. This is one of his constant unchangeable needs. If this need is not equally

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This is exactly opposite to the stances of the Shi'ite Imams. They never ignored the -۱ basic role of the ruling system in corrupting the people. Therefore, they paid attention to individual upbringing as they did to social reform and especially reforming the ruling system. Even where deviation from the right path was for reasons other than inherent mischief and the power was in the hands of an individual or system with such characteristics, they did not show much willingness to confront such individuals. For

example, Imam ‘Ali thus (‘a) wrote in his will about the Rebels, “After me, do not fight with the Rebels because one who seeks the truth but goes on the wrong path is not like the one who seeks falsehood and achieves it.” Sermon ۶۱, Nahj al-Balaghah, edited by Subhi Salih. From the very early days of the appearance of Islam, this religion could employ its followers and especially the youth successfully. Such a mechanism was in the first place due to the characteristics of this religion and its coordination with the human nature. This continues to date and will continue in the future. In this regard, one can reflect on the speech of Abu Hamzah Khariji when he addressed to the people of Hijaz, who criticized his supporters for his young age, “O’ the people of Hijaz! Do you blame the young age of my companions? Is it not true that the Prophet’s Companions were young too? Young people who lived in their youth [as piously] as old people. They take their eyes away from evil and their feet are hard to move on the wrong path. They are thin and weak because of staying awake at night to worship. God looks at them in the dark of the night while their backs bend on the Qur’an because they see a verse that tells of the paradise and cry happily about that. And when they read a verse corcerning hell, they yell as if they hear sounds come from the hell... In the most frightful moments of the battlefield when the pioneers of the army tremble with the fear of death and from the dazzle of the swords and spears, they see the fear of enemy minute compared to their fear of God and step forward. The wild animals go to their dead bodies and the birds fly to them. So many eyes that cried with the fear of God through the night are taken in beaks of the bids and so many hands that prostrated through the night for long periods of time are cut from the wrist...” Al-Bayan wa’t-Tabyin, vol. ۲, pp. ۱۰۲-۳. His description of the religius piety of his young followers and that they think but to the promotion of the religion while devoting themselves for this cause is one that is more or less true about all times. For example, see the various issues of the magazine An-Nadhir, the organ of Syrian Ikhwan al-Muslimin and books that study the actions and spirits of the devotees of Islam. Also, see Payambar wa Fir‘un (The Prophet and the Pharaoh).

found with all people, it is not because it does not exist. Rather, the reason is the scattering of their internal forces. They are attracted by numerous factors and their forces are scattered without being sufficiently concentrated for the appearance and

.emergence of this intrinsic aptitude

However, from among the many elements that can attract one, religion is undoubtedly one of the most important and powerful. This returns on the one hand to one's intrinsic aptitude to seek the religion and God and, on the other hand, to the deep nature of the religion itself. It is because of this that it can permeate the depths of one's subconscious and employ all his visible and invisible forces. From this point of view, there is not much difference between Islam and the other religions, such as Christianity, for example. Medieval Christianity employed its followers the same way. A Christian missionary or warrior would work and devote himself with the same passion as a Muslim missionary or jihad warrior. However, in the modern era, when Christianity, and not just Christianity but all the other religions other than Islam, made extensive reforms and put aside many of their authentic elements and primary claims, the difference in Islam and Christianity emerged. Present-day Christianity, contrary to medieval Christianity, is a set of rites with a limited capacity, incapable of .mobilizing and employing all the capabilities of its followers, as in the past

The fact that one does not see Christians nowadays who are as firm as in

p: ۲۶۵

the past is not due to the intrinsic weakness of today's Christianity. Rather, it is mainly due to the weakness of the version of Christianity which is now believed in because Christianity today is not as firm, determined and direct as it was in the past and is actually required of a divine religion. When a religion is set back by the modern civilization by its necessities and pressures and it retreats step by step and gives up its original values in order to adapt to the present conditions at any price, it cannot have the minimum attraction with the help of which to create love and devotion in its followers. The inattention and non-devotion of Christians nowadays is more due to the internal weakness of Christianity promoted by the modern church than to their (weak faith.(۱

This is the difference of Islam and the other religions, on top of Christianity today. For various reasons, which related entirely to its essence and nature, Islam went, and

could only go, on a path different from the one that the other religions went or had to go on in the modern centuries. Although modern Muslim thinkers wanted it and still want it to be like the other ones. It is precisely because of this that the Islamic beliefs among the masses of the people are not less original than those of their fathers in the past centuries. This means that this religion has retained its originality, purity, entirety, certainty and explicitness and has

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.For further explanation, see On Being a Christian, especially pp.۳۱-۴ -۱

been able to preserve the same influence, attraction and potential that it had in the past centuries. It can quench the thirst of the new generation and employ them in the same way as it did their ancestors.(۱)

Nevertheless, the discussion was that Islam can develop the internal capabilities of its followers and make them fond of it and employ their mobilized force for promoting its objectives. Now, the point is, when these forces and capabilities flourish but do not have a chance in the sociopolitical scene, it will be deviated and misled, and will turn into a force to encounter all that is deemed as heresy. When the emotions are excited, they will not submit to reason. Then the individual will seek to make his religion the most devoted by encountering whatever that is heresy. It will not matter to him if the one whom he attacks is his brother or fellow believer. He sees confronting him one whom will mean his religious purity and the victory of the religion, the truth, the Qur'an and the Prophet (S). This is not because the one he encounters is really on the wrong path. It is he who needs cases to deem as misled although this might be a mental process and an illusion, so as to apply the fire within him for devotion.(۲)

Scenes of bloody sectarian clashes throughout the history of Islam did not just involve Shi'ites versus Sunnis. It is surprising that sectarian violence between Hanafites and Shafi'ites(۳) or the

۱- Gibb truly attributes this to the nature of Islam, “The belief system of Islam is a consolidated, positive and emphatic collection. These characteristics are due to the Qur’an, the sayings, the tradition and the shari‘ah.”

۲- The study of the psychological, religious and morals of the Sa‘udi Ikhwanites and their actions well reveals this. See The Wahhabis, pp. ۴۴۶-۵۹. For example, Hafiz Wahabah, who was closely familiar with them and witnessed their wars, says in this regard, “The Ikhwanites are not afraid of death. They embrace death in order to return to God. When a mother says goodbye to her child, she says, ‘God will bring us and you together in heaven.’ Upon attacking, their slogan is, ‘O’ God we only worship You and get help only from You.’ I witnessed some of their wars and saw how they embrace death and go to the enemy group by group while thinking only about breaking and killing the enemy’s army. The Ikhwanites in general have no mercy. They release no one and, wherever they go, they are the messengers of death.” The Wahhabis, p. ۴۵۲, quoted from Jazirat al-‘Arab fi’l-Qarn al-‘Ishrin, p. ۳۱۴. Wajjan Filbi says about them, “The Ikhwanites have prohibited murders, pillage, banditry, smoking and living a good comfortable life. Their attempts were mainly focused on saving for the other world. Other than themselves, they called all the other Islamic sects polyetheists and idolaters.” The Wahhabis, p. ۴۴۹, quoted from the Tarikh-e Najd, pp. ۳۰۵-۸.

۳- For finding out about the competition between the Hanafites and Shafi‘ites, which prepared the ground for many conflicts, the following story, which is quoted from Hindu Shah, is worth reflecting upon, “Khwajah was the follower of the Supreme Imam Shafi‘i. Sultan Malik Shah built a school. When they wanted to write which group attended the school, they asked the Sultan. He said, ‘Although I am a Hanafite, I have constructed this for God Almighty. It is not good to protect and let a group attend and prohibit another.’ He said that the followers of both Imams had to attend the school equally and cooperatively. As the Sultan was a Hanafite, they wanted to write the name of Imam Hanafiyyah before the name of Imam Shafi‘i. Khwajah did not allow this. The book had to wait for a while… Finally, it was decided that it should be written, “Endowed to the followers of the two Imams from the early imams of Islam.” Majalleh-ye Daneshkadeh-ye Adabiyyat wa ‘Ulum-e Insani (Journal of the Faculty of

Literature and Humanities), serial no. ۵۶, p. ۷۴۲, quoted from Tajarub as-Salaf, pp. ۲۷۷-۸.

Traditionists and the non-Traditionists were far more extensive and bloodier. (۱) The problem was not a Shi'ite-Sunni one—indeed, according to what was said, there was in practice a much greater number of moves by Sunnis against Shi'ites rather than the other way round as Shi'ites, apart from the fact that they were generally in a minority, they were not like the Sunnis in terms of facing jurisprudential and theological limitations for making and taking sociopolitical moves and actions and for having a revolutionary potential for reform. Apart from this, their jurisprudential and theological foundations, religious thought and historical experiences were not so as to consider Sunnis to be outside the religion.(۲) The problem was that there was no means for expressing religious purity other than by fighting heresy in the sense, as we said, of relating to the ruling system. It was as if the heresy of the other sects had attracted the entire sap of the tree of religious self-sacrifice and devotion and the other branches had been cut away. In other words, 'sacrifice oneself for the high objectives and ideals of the religion" was put at the service of rejecting heresy, the way they called it, a current that is still going on.(۳)

Ideology of the Ruling System

What has so far been said was related to the development of Shi'ite and Sunni political thought in the first one or two centuries, to the background in which the Sunni jurisprudence and theology developed and what effects this background had on its realization. However, how these

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۱- The strong fanaticism between Shafi'ites and Hanafites, between maturidiyun" ('those who follow their wishes') and Ash'arites, between Sunnis, Mu'tazilites and Shi'ites was one of the most important factors to weaken the Muslims. One who reads Muqaddasi's Safarnameh and Yaqut's Mu'jam al-Buldan, will find out to what extent such fanaticism resulted in destruction of lands, killing of people and creating

disturgances...” Zuhr al-Islam, ۴, p. ۱۰۲. “In ۳۵۰ AH, there was a great dispute between Sunnis and Sudanese soldiers on one hand and Shi‘ites on the other hand. The soldiers would ask anyone that they saw on the street, “Who is your uncle?” If he failed to say Mu‘awiyah, they would beat him severely or even kill him. In the years, ۴۰۸, ۴۴۴, ۴۴۵ and ۴۴۹ AH, there were terrible conflicts and many from both sides were killed...” Al-Fikr as-Siyasi ash-Shi‘i, pp. ۲۸۵-۸.

۲- “Among the Islamic sects, Shi‘ites were subject to killing and violation more than the others. There were many reasons for this; most importantly because the people inclined towards them since they [their leaders] were as the Prophet’s Family. The tendency grew so strong that it very worried and terrified the Umayyad and the ‘Abbasid and they became strict on them, prosecuted and tortured them.” Islam bila Madhahib, p. ۲۸۵.

۳- Many of those who now, especially in black Africa, the Indian Subcontinent and the Far East, spend their energy to fight Shi‘ism have the same motivation. They seek a means to do their duty in the religion and are ready to give their life in order to promote their religion and its purification. However, since they do not have the means to this goal and, at the same time because of their unawareness and naïveté, are under the influence of the hostile propaganda of Wahhabis against Shi‘ites, which is full of lies and slanders, are ready to do all they can for this cause in order to do their duty properly. These have to be considered separately from spiteful Wahhabis who are aware of what they are doing for their own interests. See Afriqa: Mirath-e Gozashteh wa Mawqi‘iyyat-e Ayandeh (Africa, the Past Heritage and the Future Situation), pp. ۱۱۲-۴.

foundations were understood in the following centuries and how they developed are independent subjects without considering which one cannot understand the present situation, especially because their social, religious and psychological structures and institutions are formed in this same period. In the meanwhile, the religious and political method of the ‘Abbasid caliphs was more effective and critical. Although the foundations of Sunni political thought were laid at the time of the Senior Caliphs and the Umayyad, especially Mu‘awiyah, it was in fact the ‘Abbasids who developed it into a final system. They needed the religion and pretended so and made use of it as much

(as possible in order to preserve and continue their rule.(1)

The flourishing, extension and development of Islamic sciences from jurisprudence, sayings and analysis to theology, statesmanship and history, go back to the same period. Because of their general politics, it was natural that this current be strongly influenced by their interests. It practically became so influential that the Sunni jurisprudential and theological system was involved in the ruling system of the society and, finally, turned into the ruling system's ideology and justified and legalized it.(2) Later, after the fall of the 'Abbasid caliphate, the bond was still in place and was put at .the service of local rulers

This requires further explanation. The fact is that the 'Abbasids, in order to consolidate their power and position, needed the religion more than their predecessors. The Islamic society was more integrated and harmonious in the Umayyad period than in the

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۱- "In ۱۴۳ A.H., Muslim clerics began to put in writing the sayings, jurisprudence and analyses. Ibn Jarih did this in Mecca, Malik wrote the book Mu'atta in Medina, Owza'i in Syria, Ibn Abi 'Urubah and Himmad ibn Salmah and others in Basrah, Mu'ammar in Yemen, Sufyan Thawri in Kufah, Ibn Ishaq wrote Maghazi and Abu Hanifah wrote on jurisprudence and collected opinions. Much was done on the compilation and classification of the sciences and various books were written on Arabism, language, history and the stories of the past. Prior to this, the clergy talked of memorizing and would narrate science from reliable books that had not been complied." Tarikh al-Khulafa', p. ۲۶۱. In order to study what factors and reasons prevented the writing of the Prophetic sayings in the early period, see Al-Milal wa'n-Nihal, pp. ۵۱-۷۱, and also see the discussion in the book Adwa' 'ala'-Sunnah al-Muhammadiyyah in this respect on page ۲۶۱ and thereafter. In the beginning, the clerics, following the tradition of the past, were not willing to write books and, when Hisham forced Zahri to do so, the .others followed suit. Ibid., p. ۲۶۲

۲- See the introduction to Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. ۱, pp. ۳۵-۴۹, printed by Al al-Bayt

.Institute. Concerning the ‘Abbasid policies, see Goldziher, Muslim Studies, pp. ٧۵-٧

Abbasid period. The newly converted Muslims of the newly conquered lands in the‘ Umayyad period were frightened of the new situation and power that had dethroned their kings. They either witnessed the events that went on or were finally in the employment of Arab or ethnic Arab rivals who had risen to fight for power. Years had to pass before they could discover that they could effectively and actively participate .in the formation of the sociopolitical and even religious and cultural currents

In the late Umayyad period, the days of seclusion and watching had passed. That is to say, the non-Arab Muslims entered onto the scene, providing for the fall of the Umayyad. Their fall intensified their entering on the scene in all its aspects. The other problem was the presence of new forces that not only had political claims, but had religious and cultural aspects that aggravated the sociopolitical differences despite all (its positive results.(١

The set of these conditions weakened the power of the ‘Abbasids compared to the Umayyads.(٢) This was not because, for example, the ‘Abbasid caliphs were less capable or probably less strict or tyrannical; rather, it was mainly due to the change in the conditions. The conditions in the ‘Abbasid period did not allow the pursuit of the Umayyad policies. If the Umayyads had taken power in the ‘Abbasid time, they would .have followed more or less similar policies and would have a similar degree of power

What matters here is the effect of these conditions on the

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١ - An example of non-Arab and especially Iranian influence in the early ‘Abbasid society can be noticed in this story. Mansur asked Imam Musa ibn Ja‘far to attend the Nowruz feast to visit the presents. The Imam refused. Mansur said in response, “This ceremony is held for political reasons and for pleasing the army.” Jawahir al-Kalam, .vol. ۵, p. ۴٢

٢ - In the last century, classical Sunni thought, especially where it concerned the relations of the clergy and the sultans’ and caliphs’ courts has been sharply criticized.

The critics are from various groups and do so with different motivations. Some are clergy, like Shaykh Kushak, Khalid Muhammad Khalid and the Ikhwan al-Muslimin-dependent clergy in general, above them Sayyid Qutb. Other than these, they are leftists and progressivists, libral or freethinkers. Criticism of some of them, who are generally from the first group, is reformist, constructive and sympathetic while that of the others is bitter, disturbant and, probably, despicable and destructive. Concerning the views of Shaykh Kushak, see Payambar wa Fir'un (The Prophet and the Pharaoh), pp. ۲۱۹-۲۰. For views of Khalid Muhammad Khalid, see Ash-Shi'ah fi'l-Mizan, pp. ۳۷۵-۸. For views of clergy supporting al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin, see Al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun wa'l-Jama'at al-Islamiyyah, pp. ۲۶۲-۷۰. For criticisms of the second group, see Al-Islam wa'l-Khilafah fi'l-'Asr al-Ḥadith, pp. ۹-۳۴, especially ۱۸-۲۳, and introduction by .Muhammad 'Amarah to Al-Islam wa Usul al-Hukm

Sunni jurisprudential and theological structure, which was founded and flourished mainly in this period. That is to say that the caliph's weak military power made it necessary to use the religion as a means to consolidate his position. In fact, the .religion made up for the power that could no longer be obtained by sword

This does not mean that all the clerics who followed a similar path followed the caliph or pursued certain interests that could be gained by doing so. Doubtless, there were people among them that arrived at such conclusions only for the protection of the religion and for the security of the people. In their opinion, what mattered in those hard days of tension was a powerful centrality that could protect the religion and the people's property and lives, while the ruler alone could not create such centrality. .Therefore, the religion had to help create such centrality

Thus, the religion was adopted as the ruler's ideology. This did not mean that the religion responded to the ideological needs of the ruling system concerning how to run a society and how to govern. Rather, it was like a support to make up for his weaknesses and shortages. This indeed required a minimum of the religious appearances to be considered by the ruling system. It was not possible to ask the people to bow to and defend the ruling system while the system was entirely (inattentive to religious appearances.(۱

According to this, one has to say that, if the ‘Abbasid caliphs

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١- “In the early ٤th centuary A.H., most ‘Abbasid lands were governed by local governments without any or with little connection to the ‘Abbasids and only symbolized by mentioning the caliph’s names in sermons. As a result, their territory was in practice limited to Baghdad and a small part of Iraq.” Nizam al-Wizarah fi’d-Dawlah al-‘Abbasiyyah, p. ١٩.

after Harun were not militarily weak, the Sunni jurisprudential and theological structure, at least where it concerns the political and governmental issues, would be shaped otherwise. This did not arouse any objection by Sunnis themselves until the contemporary era. In the latter period, and especially in the last two decades, numerous objections were made, some indications of which can be traced in the writings of revolutionary and even reformist Islamic or non-Islamic political groups in Egypt, northern Africa and some Arab countries.(١)

However, Shi‘ite ideology did not go on this route from the very beginning. Its principles were not so as to be able to turn into the ideology of the ruling system, even where the sultan was a Shi‘ite. When the religious acceptability of the ruling system is defined in connection with its conformity to the principles and conditions that the ruler of the ruling system should have, such an ideology cannot be adopted by the ruling system and cannot serve its justification.

The theoretical foundations of Sunni ideology were so that, in practice, it had no claim other than legalizing and justifying the present conditions. This was, firstly, because its theoretical and doctrinal foundations had been formed and had grown under the influence of political and historical realities, especially where it related to the early period of Islam. In other words, here the ideology was peripheral to and derived from the reality—we have already said that, in the issue of imamate and leadership, despite Shi‘ites, who first defined the

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۱ - As an example, concerning the religious policy adopted by the Seljuks and their employing the policy for consolidating their political position, see Nizam al-Wizarah fi'd-Dawlah al-'Abbasiyyah, pp. ۴۷-۵۰. Regarding their religious policies, Ibn Athir says, "When the Seljuks took power, they revived the grandeur of caliphate, which had been weakened, especially during the vizierate of Nizamu'l-Mulk. He carried this out in the best way possible." See ibid. when quoting from At-Tarikh al-Bahir fi'd-Dawlah al-Atabakiyyah, p. ۵۱, and also An-Naqd, pp. ۴۷-۸, which provides a positive account of their religious actions. This policy was followed by the 'Abbasid themselves. Al-Bandari says that the 'Abbasids—he means in ۶th centuary A.H., improved the caliphate's image so that "Baghdad was so grand to its enemies that taking it would be impossible. Therefore, no king made any attempt to conquer it." Nizam al-Wizarah fi'd-Dawlah al-'Abbasiyyah, p. ۶۴ quoting Al Saljuq, p. ۲۶۸. For further explanation, see ibid., pp. ۶۲-۷.

position, Sunnis defined and interpreted the position in the light of the one who was in the position. To them, what had happed in the early period was true and religiously acceptable.

Naturally, they would derive the definitions and concepts from the officially accepted cases. Secondly, the reason for this was that they deemed the preservation and protection of the religion possible only in the light of the existence of the government and the governing system.(۱) Since this had been accepted as a principle, it would serve to justify and legalize the present situation. Their thoughts and minds were shaped like this from the very beginning, especially because, in their view, the consensus of the Companions, the Followers and the clerics of the later periods as well as the Qur'anic texts and the Prophet's tradition approved it as well.(۲)

The problem was not just that they had accepted such a principle. They thought this way. More importantly, they understood the religion like this and would interpret it like this. Doubtless, there were many among them who accepted and promoted this method because of bad intentions or for gaining material profit or approaching the

sultan. Yet, it cannot be denied that there were also others who had accepted it for reasons that were mentioned.(۳)

Nevertheless, these foundations were otherwise with Shi'ites, who did not think or bow other than to their own rules, criteria and values. That is to say, they did not consider the justification of the present situation and avoiding

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۱ - A'lam al-Mawqi'in, vol. ۱, pp. ۴۷-۸. Grunebaum thus explains the major characteristics of the Muslim government and its role in preserving the religious and moral authenticities: ۱. The purpose of the creation of man is worship. ۲. Perfect worshipping requires a group of believers. ۳. To have such an ummah, a government is needed. ۴. The first duty of the government is to provide the grounds for worshipping." G.E. Grunebaum, Islam, ۱۹۶۹, p. ۱۲۷.

۲- Concerning the value and importance of consensus, especially the consensus of the Companions and the Senior Caliphs, which, in Subhi Salih's words, is the third source of Islamic shariah legislation, and how it has been the source of many governmental and caliphate affairs, see An-Nazm al-Islamiyyah, p. ۲۸۱. The author believes that the most important aspect for caliphate itself is consensus and the sayings that have been provided in this respect have been aimed at further consolidating and approving something whose source was proved with consensus.

۳ - Read these words of Ibn Taymiyyah, "Ahmad ibn Hanbal writes an account of 'Abdullah bin 'Umar, who in turn quotes the Prophet (S) as saying, 'Any person in any part of the earth shall appoint one as leader.' The Prophet (S) necessitated having a leader even in a small community so it may be a lesson for other communities. God necessitated recommending the good and prohibiting the evil. This can be carried out only with power and leadership. In addition, the other necessary obligations such as jihad, administration of justice, hajj, the Friday, the feasts, victory of the oppressed and enforcing the other orders can be carried out only with power and leadership. Therefore, it has been quoted that, "The king is God's shadow on the earth.", "Sixty years living under a tyrant leader is better than one night without a sultan." These are

proved by experience." Then he adds, "It is because of this that the good people of the past such as Fudayl ibn 'Ayyad, Ahmad ibn Hanbal and the others said, 'If there is one prayer that we can do and will be fulfilled, it will be a prayer for the sultan." As-Siyasah .ash-Shar'iyyah, pp. ۱۳۸-۹. Also see Tabaqat al-Hanabilah, ۲, p. ۳۶

weakening the ruler's power and probably trying to strengthen it, as some Sunnis claimed so, to be the only way to preserve and protect the religion. At least in certain parts of history they believed the contrary. Therefore, in their opinion, the present situation has to be accepted so long as it conforms to these rules or if the conditions are so that the preservation and protection of the religion require non-opposition to (the ruling system, in which case they would neither recognize it nor oppose it.(۱

Although this difference may not seem very important and critical at first glance, it has shown its importance in the course of the developments of the new period. The theoretical problems of contemporary Islamic movement in the Sunni world and lack of such problems among Shi'ites are initially due to this difference as the meaningful silence of Sunni religious circles against the criticism of the new generation about their support of Islam offered and interpreted by the corrupt tyrants, whether in the (past or in the present, is because of the same reason.(۲

Although some Shi'ite intellectuals in Iran and in other countries have made similar criticisms against the Shi'ite clergy, the problem here had other causes and could, therefore, be solved. Although there were some Shi'ite clerics by the side of Shi'ite rulers in the past, this had secondary causes and was not because they considered the ruling system as religiously acceptable or their obligation to be religiously required. The necessity of defending the

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The truth is that Fatimite policies and those of Al Buyeh do not express Shi'ite" -۱ beliefs. They were governments in their own time." Ash-Shi'ah wa'l-Ḥakimun, p. ۷. "... Therefore, actions of kings who called themselves Shi'ites have nothing to do with Shi'ite beliefs and Shi'ites do not see any relation between themselves and these

rulers and think that any seizure by them is a personal one. If it is according to the Qur'an and the Tradition, it is right. Otherwise, they are sinners. Therefore, the Shi'ites divest themselves of any responsibility in the rulers' seizures. As politics is mixed with religion and, at the same time, politics has not been manifested other than in the practice of the Infallible Imams, Shi'ite political thought cannot go beyond the opinions and practice of the Imams. Principally, Shi'ite political thought can be clarified according to Shi'ite views and actions regarding political issues. Any action or seizure from a Shi'ite and any view that he expresses, if being according to the orders of the Infallible Imams, is part of Shi'ite political thought. Otherwise, it is separate therefrom." Al-Fikr as-Siyasi ash-Shi'i, p. ۲۸۰. For further explanation, see ibid., pp. ۲۶۸-۷۱.

۲ - For example, see this bitter and destructive criticism by Mustafa Shukri, who founded an armed Islamic movement in Egypt and was executed after being arrested and tried, which is about the Four Leaders of Sunni jurisprudence. In fact, he tries not only them, but also mainly the jurisprudents of the later periods and those of his time and accuses them of being accomplices of the sultans. In response to the question why the Four Leaders claimed they took religious expertise to its ultimate limit, he says, "So that they and their writings would be admired and they would be idols to worship like gods in temples. Therefore, they put themselves between God and the believers and took themselves outside Islam. They belong to the Ignorance and savagery." Then he adds, "Did those who claimed that jurisprudence was completed really do so? No, they did so for the public and the remainder of the Muslims but left it open to interpretation through generations of court clergy so that the latter may issue fatwas proportionate to the ruling opinions, no matter who and what opinion rule, and so that, in the name of Islam, they can propagate sins and legalize the illegal. If we were to provide examples of the present and of the past, no one could deny... because there are cases of prescribing adultery, usury and legalizing the government on principles other than divine principles and even cases of approving prostitution and drinking alcohol in the name of Islam." Then, he gives examples of fatwas issued in his time. Payambar wa Fir'un (The Prophet and the Pharaoh), pp. ۸۸-۹.

true religion and a more important expediency led them to adopt such a position

temporarily. Apart from this, as there was not such a necessity in the contemporary times and they had to stand up against the ruling power in order to defend and support the religion, even if the power was a Shi'ite one, they did so.

The Shi'ite Stance

The important thing, nevertheless, is that, for certain reasons, the way the clerics stood by the side of the sultan was different in the Shi'ite and Sunni history. A Shi'ite cleric could never accept the legality of the power attained by religiously unacceptable means and which acts with a method contrary to the religious rules. Because of this, he could not approve it in this respect. If he had to approve and support him, it was for peripheral and secondary reasons.(1) However, a Sunni cleric did not face such a limitation. To him, the ruler simply because he was the ruler and had the power was religiously acceptable and had to be obeyed. At least, he would deem any opposition to him as religiously prohibited. If some of the early jurisprudents expressed doubts as to the necessity of obeying a ruler only because he was a ruler, they did not yet unanimously agree on the acceptability of opposition.(2)

Indeed, a moral and pious factor prevented the pious Sunni clerics and jurisprudents from getting close to the sultan. They would stay away from the sultanate as it often involved material pleasures, tyranny, violation of others'

1- For example, see Nokhostin Ruyaruyiha-ye Andisheh-garan-e Iran (The First Encounters of Iranian Thinkers), pp. ۳۲۳-۶۶.

2- A small group of Sunni jurisprudents have allowed opposing the corrupt ruler if there is no way to make him go on the right path other than by the force of the sword. See the considerable views of Imam al-Haramayn Juwayni in Sharh al-Maqasid, pp. ۲۷۱-۵. Indeed, as it has already been said, these have always been and remained in a minority.

rights, lavish drinking and forgetting about the afterworld and the Resurrection. They would similarly avoid the company of the others who lived a similar life. As we said,

this mainly had moral rather than doctrinal reasons. According to pious Sunni clerics, the sultan himself was one who had to be avoided in order to avoid the world and the pursuit of worldly pleasures. They followed sayings in this regard that advised (avoiding the sultan.(١)

Considering the above points, one has to see now why some Shi'ite clerics, some of whom were among the best-known of their time and even the following times, stood .by the sultan's side. In fact, most clerics in the Safavid time were so

The basic reason for this was the political conditions of those times and the constant tensions between the Safavids and the Ottomans. The rivals of the Ottomans, i.e. the Safavids, were Shi'ites. Therefore, it would be in the Ottomans' interest to introduce the Shi'ites as people away from or even outside of and opposing Islam. By doing this, they could arouse the support and courage of their people and persuade them, under the claim of defending the religion and gaining rewards in the afterworld, to do things that they liked and they managed in so doing.(٢) However, the important point is that these actions and arousals were and could not merely be against the Safavids and would naturally include the Shi'ites that lived within the Ottoman territory. It was exactly because of this reason that

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١- In his readable book Talbis Iblis, Ibn al-Jawzi mentions the various traps that the Satan may set for jurisprudents, including their approaching the sultans. He talks on this elaborately, "... In addition, entering a sultan's court is a dangerous thing to do because, although one may have good intentions in the beginning, one will gradually change as a result of being respected and tipped or by having greed and avoiding advising the good and prohibiting the bad. Sufyan Thawri used to say, 'I fear a sultans' respect rather than insult because then my heart will incline towards them. The clergy of the past avoided the sultans because of their oppression while the latter asked them for fatwas and judgments. Consequently, a group was formed that were fond of the world, would learn sciences that would be useful to emirs and would run to them with these sciences in order to have worldly fortunes..." Talbis Iblis, pp. ١١٨-٩.

Such criticisms can be found in abundance in books of the sayings, ethics and history. For example, Ghazali elaborates on the position that the cleric scholars have to adopt towards sultans, "…And this was the practice and habit of the scholars in advising the good and prohibiting the bad. They were saved by not fearing the sultans and relying on God. They were satisfied with God's orders and willing, if God wanted to make them martyrs. As they had pure intentions, their words were very effective on hearts and would soften them. However, greed has now closed the mouths of the clerics and silenced them. If they say something, their words do not suit their actions and, therefore, they will not succeed. If they are honest in what they say and have good intentions, they will succeed. The corruption of the people is because of the corruption of the sultan and that of sultan is because of the corruption of the clergy. The corruption of the latter is for love of wealth and positions. One who is filled with the love of the world cannot lead the rabbles to the right path let alone the kings and great people." Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din, vol. ۷, p. ۹۲. Interestingly, Ghazali allows entering a sultan's court only in two cases, which indicates his politico-religious perception as, "Entering a sultan's court is acceptable only on two grounds. First, if the king calls the cleric scholar by force rather than with respect, while the cleric knows that, if he refuses to accept the call, he will be persecuted and, if he avoids to enter the sultan's court, this will result in the people's uprising and in political disputes, in which case it is necessary to go to the court, not for obeying the king but for the people's expedience so that the government will not be disturbed. The second is for removing an oppression on a Muslim or on himself…" Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din, Ch. ۶, as quoted in Al-Islam bayn al-'Ulama' wa'l-Hakimun, p. ۱۱۲. Also see, Al-Fawa'id, Ibn Qayyim, pp. ۱۴۹-۵۳. Also see Goldziher, The Zahiris, p. ۱۶۵, and Gibb, Studies on the Civilization of Islam, .p. ۱۴۵

An example of this policy can be found in a sermon by a Friday communal prayer -۲ leader of Aba Sufiyah Mosque, Shaykh Ubaydullah, early in the month of Ramadan of the later years of the Ottoman caliphate, "… Here I repeated what I said before, that all the people, other than the poor, the handicapped and the blind, who are among them, the sheikhs who claim that they are inheritors of the Prophet (S), the teachers, muftis, judges, heads of Sufi sects, dervishes, merchants, craftsmen and all the people, have become apostades according to the Qur'an, are among the hypocrites

and it is necessary to kill them because they have intentionally abandoned jihad with wealth and body, for whose proof there are thousands of Qur'anic verses. It is necessary to make them faithful again by: First, making them personally appear in battlefields. Secondly, they shall give half of their wealth to the seat of the Turkish caliphate so that the Turks can take revenge on their domestic and foreign enemies... If they fail to do so, i.e. to give half of their wealth to the government, their reconversion to the faith is not accepted and, on the Day of Resurrection, they will be resurrected with apostates and infidels and will go to hell..." Thawrah al-'Arab didd al-Atrak, p. ۲۲۴, from p. ۲۵, Qawm Jadid (The New People).

they were under constant pressure, harassment, murder and pillage. Some of the slaughters were so extensive that the Shi'ites in some parts were eliminated forever. As an example, Sultan Salim I, after he dethroned his father Sultan Yazid II and killed his brother and took the throne, in the very beginning ordered the beheading of ۴۰,۰۰۰ Shi'ites.(۱)

In fact, the political rivalry between the two had resulted in religious rivalry or rather hostility. The fact is that, if it is assumed that the two had a similar role in arousing political rivalry, the Ottomans doubtless had a greater share in arousing religious hostility because the Safavids were Shi'ites and the Shi'ites had never throughout the history considered the Sunnis to be outside of Islam so as to fight them on such grounds.(۲) However, the contrary is true. For reasons that are beyond the present discussion, there were numerous occasions when the Sunni mobs, provoked by a worldly cleric or a bloodthirsty emir, attacked Shi'ites. The same was true in this case, i.e. the Ottoman sultans could easily employ such a mentality in order to provoke the people to fight against Iran or the Shi'ites within their territory. Indeed the undesirable consequences of such provocations were far deeper and longer lasting than was expected by the sultan or the other provokers.(۳)

The Safavids and the Shi'ite Clergy

Under such circumstances, the clergy naturally stood by the sultan's side in order to defend the status and the only powerful Shi'ite centrality(۴) so as to protect the power

that was constantly

۱- Ma'alim al-Khilafah fi'l-Fikr as-Siyasi al-Islami, p. ۱۱. The elaborate account of the story can be found in the book Al-Bilad al-'Arabiyyah wa'd-Dawlah al-'Uthmaniyyah by Sati' al-Husari, the famous Arab nationalist theoretician. Pages ۳۰۰-۱ of Al-Fikr as-Siyasi ash-Shi'i thus quote part of the story, "Sultan Salim became the leader of the Sunnis and took a fatwa from the evil scholars to the effect that Shi'ites are not Muslims and it is necessary to kill them. He, therefore, ordered the beheading of any person within his territory who was known to be a Shi'ite." p. ۳۸. Ha'iri quotes Sanders on Sultan Salim and his actions as saying, "During the ۸ years of his reign—۹۱۸-۹۲۷ A.H—the Sultan attacked Iran and, from ۹۲۰ A.H. onwards, he conquered Kurdistan and Azerbaijan, killing or jailing anyone within his territory who was known to be a Shi'ite. Sunni clerics had said that killing a Shi'ite is more appropriate than killing ۷۰ Christians. According to an account, ۴۰,۰۰۰ Shi'ites were killed in those events." Journal of the Faculty of Literature Humanities, Mashhad University, serial nos. ۵۷-۵۸, pp. ۵, ۶.

۲- For exmaple, although the Seljuks for various reasons had an extensive anti-Shi'ite policy (Nizam al-Wizarah fi'l-Dawlah al-'Abbasiyyah, p. ۴۷), and Khajé Nezamolmolk considered them to be infidels, saying, "Kill them whenever you see them.", or "He ordered that the heretics be taken to the rostrums, their heads be uncovered...and it be said to them, 'You are the enemies of the religion.'". At the same time, however, one of the great Shi'ite theologians of that time, Abdoljalil Qazvini, says in appreciation of the religious deeds of the Seljuks, "The truth is that, throughout the world, whatever of Islam that appears in schools, mosques, Sufi monasteries, rostrums, good traditions and rejection of heresies, is indebted to the power of Seljuk sword." Majalleh-ye Daneshkadeh-ye Adabiyyat wa 'Ulum-e Insani (Journal of the Faculty of Literature and Humanities), serial no. ۵۶, pp. ۷۴۴-۵, quoting An-Naqz wa Siyasatnameh. There are many such examples in Shi'ite history although contrary examples are rare. For example, "When Nader Shah attempted in ۱۷۴۱ to convince the Ottoman Sultan to accept Shi'ism as the fifth branch of the religion, he went so far as to accept to call him 'the caliph of Islam', but the Sultan did not accept this.

In many cases, Shi'ites were under pressure, were beaten and killed by people -٣ other than the sultans. The evil clergy had a great role in this. They deceived the public and provoked them in the name of defending the religion against Shi'ites and, principally, against those who did not have beliefs similar to theirs, "Abu Muhammad Hasan ibn 'Ali ibn Khalaf Barbahari, the chief of the Baghdad Hanbalites, has special views and would treat harshly anyone that opposed his views and opinions, having his companions treat the people violently, even plundering their houses and bothering them in their trades and terrorizing whomever that would not accept what he said. "One of the things Barbahari did was prohibiting mourning and dirge singing about Imam Husayn and the pilgrimages to his shrine in Karbala. He would order the killing of the dirge singers. Once there was a dirge singer known as Khilb, who was a master in his job and had a good voice. I [Tanukhi] heard him in the house of one of the chiefs. At that time, no body would dare mourning on Imam Husayn in public. Dirges were also rimited on mourning on Imam Husayn and the Prophet's Family. However, when Barbahari found out about this, he ordered searching for and killing of the dirge singer." The Wahhabis, p. ٢۶. To find more examples on what Barbahari and his advocates did, see ibid., pp. ٢۶-٣٣ on the dispute with Abu'l-Hasan Ash'ari and his views, beliefs, actions and the end of his stories. See Tabaqat al-Hanabilah, vol. ٢, pp. .١٨-۴۵

The fact is that, other than the mentioned factors, there was another religious -۴ factor that would bring the clergy closer to the Safavid. The Safavid themselves were Sufis and had Sufi attitudes. It was with their help and devotion that they took the power and, therefore, they appreciated the Prophet (S) and his family. Many Shi'ite clerics in that time used this interest to convert them to Shi'ism. Their approach was for carrying out this task. It appears that Shaykh Baha'i and his father were among .these clerics

under different pressures by the rival, as a result of which they would prevent ruthless slaughters of their fellow Shi'ites in the Ottoman territory, as this was a deterrent against the disrespect shown against the Ottoman Shi'ites and their slaughter and pillage. In those critical days, the destiny of Shi'ites whether inside or outside Iran was interdependent with the strength and power of the Safavids and

they had no way other than to protect the latter. We finish this section by mentioning .a historical example that shows the conditions and situation of those days

Sultan Murad IV (۱۰۳۲-۱۰۴۹ A.H.) took interest in taking Iraq, which was controlled by" the Safavids at that time. He prepared to enter into war with Iran but, as he knew he could not defeat the Safavids, he decided to arouse a tribal and religious disturbance. Therefore, he asked the court clergy to issue a fatwa for the war against the Shi'ites. No one accepted his request other than a young man by the name of Nuh Afandi. He issued the fatwa that the Sultan desired. The title of his fatwa was, "One who kills a Shi'ite will go to paradise." In some parts of his elaborate fatwa, he said, "Know that God will make you happy as this infidel rebellious group of roués have all the types of infidelity, rebelliousness, hostility, corruption, heresy and apostasy in them and one ".who hesitates on the order to kill them is an infidel like them

He also says, "The

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reason for fighting and the permission for killing them are their rebelliousness and infidelity. They are rebellious because have refused to obey the caliph while God says, 'Fight the rebels so that they will obey God's orders.' This is a must ordered in the Qur'an. Therefore, the Muslims have to respond to the call by their caliph for fighting this rebellious group who were cursed by the Prophet. The Muslims have to help him fight them." Finally, he adds, "After killing these infidels, whether they repent or not... it is not allowed to get tribute from them or give them temporary or permanent refuge... Enslaving wives is permitted as it is allowed to enslave apostate women when they enter into war or go to a place that is not controlled by imam or caliph and this place is a war zone. Their children can also be enslaved following the (enslavement of their mothers."(۱

This fatwa resulted in a war that lasted for seven months, in which thousands of people from both sides were killed until a peace treaty was concluded between Iran .and the Ottoman Empire in the city of Qasr-e Shirin and the war ended

After the war, another war began in the Ottoman territory against Shi'ites based on the same fatwa. They killed as many of them as they could. The most terrible of all was the slaughter of the people of Aleppo as it was a Shi'ite-settled city since the time of the Hamdanites. The slaughter and pillage was

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۱- The story of the persistence of this fatwa and its consequences can be found in the magazine Turathuna, no. ۶, pp. ۳۸-۴۱, and in Al-Fusul al-Muhimmah fi Ta'lif al-Ummah, pp. ۱۴۳-۷. To find other examples, see the same magazine, pp. ۳۲-۶۱.

so extensive and terrible that, except a few people who fled to the neighboring villages, no one survived. In this event, ۴۰,۰۰۰ Shi'ites were killed only in Aleppo, thousands of whom were the Prophet's (S) descendants. Sayyid Sharafuddin Ali ibn Hujjatullah Shulestani, who was a cleric from Najaf, sent the fatwa to Iran so that the terrible slaughters might be stopped."(۱)

Shi'ite Isolation and Its Consequences

It is necessary to mention another point here. It is the fact that Shi'ites, unlike Sunnis, were always a minority in isolation. Shi'ites lived as scattered minorities within the greater Sunni society. Even where they formed a majority and had the power, they were like an island surrounded by their neighbors. As a result of this isolation, especially after the Shi'ite sultans took power in Iran, the active connection of the Iranian religious society with the outside world and the Muslim World was cut off. When the modern history began in Muslim countries, including Iran and the other Shi'ite territories, the negative resistance of the religious society to guard its original values further isolated this society.(۲)

Although this phenomenon can be seen in Sunni communities as well, their isolation has never been so severe and as deep as that of Shi'ites. The result of this difference can now be seen in the Islamic thought and the sociocultural movements of the two, especially on a spectrum of religious scholars and thinkers who have been carrying out the mission of defending Islam in the two territories.

Although, for numerous reasons, Shi'ite Islamic thought

.Turathuna, no. ۶, p. ۴۰ -۱

.Tahawwul wa Thubat (Development and Stability), pp. ۱۶۱-۵ -۲

is more genuine and firmer than the Sunni one, because of the more direct and more extensive contact of Sunni thinkers with the modern civilization, apart from the fact that their thoughts are better updated than those of Shi'ites, their way of thinking is more objective and less subjective than that of Shi'ites. The long history of reformist .and modernist thought among Sunnis is probably affected by this

When the preservation of the original values is to mean merely a nostalgia about the past and entirely rejecting everything that is new or strange, there would be no room for reform, development and modernism. Such thought, more than originating from the religion and the religious foundations, is due to the secluded historical experience .of Shi'ites and the Shi'ite religious society

Indeed, Shi'ite seclusion, at least in Iran, has other reasons as well. Lack of communication between the religious institutions and establishments and the ruling political power has intensified the seclusion. Lack of relations between the two in modern history and while foreign influence and that of the modern culture was expanding, resulted in a clash between them. As Iran was never a colony and modern thought and culture were not directly but practically imported into the society through the ruling power and its dependents and advocates, the clash between the two finally .resulted in the clash between the religious society and modern culture

As this culture did not show itself to the religious people in any form other than colonialism, exploitation by

foreign powers, corruption and irreligiousness, they thought it proper to avoid it

entirely. They withdrew themselves from the surroundings and closed their society as much as possible so as to protect themselves and their children. Most probably, nothing could be done in such conditions and situation other than this that could be possible and useful.(۱)

However, the story of the clash of the religious society with the modern culture was not like this. First of all, the strong relation of their society with the ruling political power exposed them to almost the same thoughts and developments that the ruling system was exposed to. Secondly, their clash with the modern culture was a direct one. Sunni settlements in general, from India to the Middle East and Northern Africa were subject to colonialism for a while.

They saw the features of the modern civilization in all its aspects in the faces of their children. However, this civilization was symbolized in Iran in general by people who were frail-minded, and, alienated from themselves, who neither knew this civilization nor thought of achieving such knowledge. Their resorting to that civilization was mainly for avoiding their moral, social and religious obligations. Finally, they were so in order to distinguish themselves from the masses of the people.(۲)

In brief, the Shi'ite and Sunni societies entered the contemporary history in two completely different ways. They experienced the modern civilization, culture and thought in two different ways and this culture influenced them in two different ways. They have inherited two

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۱- An example of the perception of the clerics about the intellectuals of those days, which indicates their reality as well, can be found in these words of Sayyid Jamaluddin, "These atheists are not like the atheists of Europe because one who abandons the religion in western countries will still remain a patriot and his zeal to defend his country against foreigners will not be affected and he will be ready to give his life for the interests of his country but Ahmad Khan and his advocates, along with their propaganda for the people to abandon their religion, have made the people

indifferent to their country and prepare them to accept foreign domination and try to wipe off any religious or national determination... not for being highly rewarded but for having a mean life and mean benefits. This is how an eastern atheist can be identified from a western atheist, i.e. meanness and humiliation after heresy and infidelity." Al-'Urwah al-Wuthqa, pp. ۵۷۲-۵, quoted from Al-Fikr al-Islami al-Hadith Waslatuh bi'l-Isti'mar al-Gharbi, p. ۴۳. Al-Minar, issue of ۱۳ April ۱۹۲۵, p. ۳۱, quoting from Muhammad 'Amarah's introduction to Al-Islam wa Usul al-Hukm, pp. ۸-۹. Concerning the excitement after the fall of caliphate and the supports for the assembly, see ibid., pp. ۷-۱۴.

۲- Idi'uluzhi wa Inqilab (Ideology and Revolution), pp. ۱۶۴-۱۵.

different experiences and are children of two different developments. The study of the religious situations of these two, especially their Islamic movement, is impossible without bearing this in mind.

Now let's see, according to what has so far been said on the foundations of Shi'ite and Sunni political thoughts, how the Islamic movements are within these two realms, what differences they have and where the differences originated from.

New Pressures and Necessities

The fact is that the Shi'ite Islamic movement did not have any significant ideological problem. The doctrinal principles, jurisprudential foundations, historical experience and sociopsychological structure arising from these principles, foundations and experience were not so as to be in conflict with the necessities and pressures of modern history in order to find an Islamic answer for political and revolutionary actions. Shi'ites, led by their clergy, could rely on their ideological foundations to stand up against the tyrannical ruling system and to resist it as long as to overthrow it.

This current was in agreement with the psychological, cultural and moral consequences of the massive socioeconomic and political developments of the recent decades in Islamic countries that produced oil or somehow benefited from it. The problem was not just that, in order to protect the religion and guard its values, it was necessary to rise up against the dominant power that was inattentive or even

opposed to it—for example, the way we have been witnessing in the last fifty or one .hundred years

Religious movements in the recent century, other than in the last two

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or three decades, were for stopping the unbridled actions of the ruling system against the religious and national interests—more important than this was that such a struggle had significant objectives without considering its ultimate goal. It did not matter that one had to stand up against and lead to the right path the corrupt ruling .system in order to defend the religion

What mattered was that the various developments, the presence of active leftist and rightist groups that carried out political and revolutionary actions provided such an intellectual and psychological background for the Muslim youth and students that the very presentation of a way based on the principles of Islam which were at the same time revolutionary and challenging was itself a necessity. Other than through this way, it was not possible to quench the religious and justice-seeking souls of the youth who felt an ideological gap for justice and struggled for it. They were so thirsty and passionate that, if they could not find an answer in Islam, they would have certainly gone to other schools of thought. In order to protect its children, the religion had to (offer its revolutionary ideology.(۱

As we said, Shi'ite ideology and historical experience could well respond to this without making any change or reform in its foundations or without providing interpretations or justifications beyond its actual capacity, especially as the 'Ashura of Imam Husayn had a place in the minds and feelings of the people, a story every moment of which contained a

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۱- Ibid., pp. ۱۶۹-۱۸۴.

message and the revival of whose memory was actually the revival of the principle

that one has to oppose the corrupt tyrannical system no matter how powerful it is, and that one had to resist even by devoting one's blood. This was the most important source of inspiration for finding appropriate solutions to problems that the new Shi'ite generation faced.(1)

However, the problem was not like this with Sunnis. On the one hand, there was the pressure of the new generation and the thirsty loving souls of the youth, which required a religious, political and revolutionary answer, and, on the other hand, there was their historical jurisprudence, theology and historical experience that were contrary to such needs and expectations. The problem was both a theoretical and ideological one and a practical, historical and social one. Sunni ideology, even in its most committed, revolutionary form, never went beyond verbal advices when the sultan was a Muslim. Brave Sunni liberals throughout history were those that did not bow to the sultan and did not give up God's content for that of God's creation. They did not sell their faith to the world and were not overwhelmed by the splendor or threats or offers of the ruler. They stood against him, his wishes and expectations and told the truth despite the sultan desire and accepted the outcome of living this way.(2)

These are the great Sunni revolutionary heroes. They had the moral and spiritual power to stand firm against the world and the seekers of

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۱- In the sociopolitical developments of the Shi'ite history, the epic of Ashura has been of the utmost importance. This is truer about our time. In the Shi'ite World, at least in Iran, in the contemporary history there has always been a need for revolutionary thoughts and solutions for changing the political destiny. For example, the unclear stance of Malik ibn Anas towards Muhammad Nafs Zakiyyah is very likely due to this same point. The people of Medina wanted to support Muhammad, but they had already sworn allegiance to Mansur. Malik said that an allegiance could not be achieved with reservations. Therefore, the Medina people surrounded Muhammad, as a result of which Malik was beaten on the orders of the emir of Medina, so badly that his shoulder blade was broken. However, despite all these, when he was asked

about the permission of rising up against the ruler, he said, "If it is an uprising against 'Umar ibn 'Abdu'l-'Aziz, it is not allowed." In another citation, 'it is not allowed' has been replaced by 'God kill them, and if it is not an uprising against a person like him, let God take revenge on him through another tyrant, and then both will be taken revenge on." Al-Fikr as-Siyasi ash-Shi'i, p. ٣٢١. To find other examples of the resistance of the cleric scholars against the wishes of the rulers, see Al-Islam bayn al-'Ulama' wa'l-Hakimun, pp. ١٠۴-٢٢٢. One of the people introduced by the author is Sa'id ibn Musayyib. He resisted 'Abdu'l-Malik, who wanted to take allegiance for both his children, Walid and Sulayman at the same time, saying, "The Prophet (S) had prohibited double allegiance." He suffered much torture for this but did not submit. Adopting such positions against the sultan is essentially different from the position that, for example, Imam Husayn adopted against Yazid or Zayd ibn 'Ali against Hisham. Almost none of the Sunni scholars have admitted unacceptability of rulers .whose wishes they resisted. At the most, they would refuse to accept his demand

٢ - For example, Al-Islam bayn al-'Ulama' wa'l-Hakimun, pp. ١١۵-٣٢. However, what mattered was that Shi'ites and Sunnis have more or less different interpretations of the duty of a religious scholar. This difference is mainly or rather entirely due to their position against the ruler and that they should not remain silent against his tyranny and corruption. For example, compare the duties and responsibilities of a religious scholar the way they have been provided in the words of Imam Husayn. Tuhaf al-'Uqul, pp. ١٧١-٢, and the way they have been defined by Ibn Hanbal. A'lam al-Mawqi'in, ١, p. ٩, citing Ar-Radd 'ala'z-Zanadiqah wa'l-Jahmiyyah by Ibn Hanbal.

worldly advantages while their resistance was different from what was needed for the modern period. The new generation needed figures who would stand up against the ruling system with religious motivations and who would call the people to their way and goals. Figures like Imam Husayn, Zayd ibn 'Ali and other great Shi'ite advisors to the truth not people like Ibn Hanbal or Sa'id ibn Musayyib or other Traditionists who were beaten in the Days of Hardship but still stood firm on their beliefs.(١)

Their denial of the ruler was in their heart or, ultimately, verbal rather than in practice

—indeed, verbal denial rarely occurred where it means criticizing the ruler—because denial in practice was not deemed proper by anyone. We have already said that their avoiding advising the truth was because of their beliefs rather than conservatism. Therefore, the changes of the time did not and could not affect it. The Sunni political thought had accepted it as a principle that one cannot and should not rise up or draw one's sword against the Muslim ruler even if he is a corrupt tyrant,(۲) while this was .exactly what the modern era needed

The problem was and is not that the present rulers, whom the Sunni youth oppose, are more tyrannical or corrupt than their previous counterparts. The problem is that today's conditions are entirely different from those in the past. In the past, people would stand against the corrupt tyrant ruler in order to administer justice and spread .religion throughout the society

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۱ - Al-A'immah al-Arba'ah, pp. ۱۴۰-۸۰, and Manaqib al-Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, pp. .۳۹۷-۴۳۷

۲ - The fact that one should not rise up against the sultan and has to be patient on his oppression is unanimously agreed on by Sunni jurisprudents. Shafi'i, Malik and Ibn Hanbal have confirmed this. Intifadat ash-Shi'ah 'Ibar at-Tarikh, p. ۹۸. In his Sharh al-'Aqa'id, he cites this opinion from Abu Hanifah and then says, "After the Senior Caliphs, corruption and tyranny emerged from caliphs and rulers while [our] righteous ancestors followed them, standing behind them to say their regular and Friday communal prayers and did not rise up against them." Ibid., p. ۹۹. Those who in general do not allow such opposition have resorted to this argument. For further explanation, .see ibid., pp. ۹۷-۱۰۷, and also Tabaqat al-Hanabilah, vol. ۲, p. ۲۲

The justice and the religion required this and this required standing up against the deviating ruler. There was no obligation other than this because, firstly, the deviation of the society originated from the ruler's deviation, and that of the latter originated in him. Secondly, there was no sociopolitical, intellectual or cultural need to provide a revolutionary ideology or an ideology for armed struggle so as to, for example,

(prevent the increasing distance between the youth and the religion.(١

In our era, however, the problem had another face. The ruler was the puppet or follower or at least an ally of great world powers. It was not he who had control of the affairs. He carried out the plans that were prepared by others and given to him to be implemented. In the past, it was the ruler who had the power or ruled as he wished while now the real power lied somewhere else and he was more like a performer than (a decision-maker.(٢

Apart from this, the sociopolitical, cultural and psychological conditions had changed entirely. In the disorderly severe conditions that existed, every school provided its own solution and claimed to be solving the problem while Islam could not do so. This solution naturally had to be proportionate to the existing characteristics, some most important ones of which were aggression, challenge and reformism of the youth, which could be created only in the big urban, industrial and conflicting communities of today that were full of tension and turned into a real

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١ – To find out about the urgent need of Muslim youth to a revolutionary Islamic ideology, for example see the various issues of magazines An-Nadhir, Ath-Thawrah al-Islamiyyah, Al-Muntaliq, Ad-Da'wah and the other magazines and publications of Muslim armed groups.

٢ – Concerning the perception of Sunni revolutionary youth about the ruling regimes, see the criticisms of 'Utaybi, who, on the ١st of Muharram ١۴٠٠ A.H, seized the Ka'bah house, about the Sa'udi rulers and even the person of 'Abdu'l-'Aziz Baz, who interceded to free him from jail in ١٩٧٨ in Faith and Power, pp. ١٨٠-۵.

(need.(١

If Islam had not provided an acceptable competitive solution in such conditions, it would certainly have lost its influence. Any religion can maintain its active effective presence, if it is not indifferent to the realities and needs of the surrounding environment. It can even be said that preserving a situation worthy of the religion is

indebted to its active creative exchange with all that is going on around it. In conditions in which any school, rightfully or wrongly, claims to reform the present situation, or seeks to disrupt it in favor of a more desirable situation, and such claims were accepted by a large number of young people only because there was a proper background for them, Islam could not remain silent and just watch. This was neither possible nor would the religious commitment and zeal of religious believers, the clerics, the educated people and the intellectuals allowed this.(۲)

Other than these two factors, there was another obligatory factor which was neither internal nor external. In the recent decades, all the manifestations of the collective and individual lives had changed. Naturally such conditions would develop a psychology, thought, personality and ideal in harmony with it. The contemporary young Muslim grew up in an environment absolutely different from that of his fathers and ancestors. His psychology and personality, mind and thoughts, sensitivities and needs, wishes and ideals and, finally, understanding and perception were under the effect of the new rapid accelerating socioeconomic, intellectual and political developments. His religious understanding, even in its

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۱- Concerning the effects of modernization on Islamic societies, especially in big cities, and in general the thoughts and ideals of young people, see Payambar wa Fir'un (The Prophet and the Pharaoh), pp. ۲۷۳-۹۵, and also the researches of Sa'd ad-Din Ibrahim in this regard, and Idi'uluzhi wa Inqilab (Ideology and Revolution), pp. ۱۶۹-۱۷۸.

۲- As to the quality and amount of pressure that Islam has borne in the ۵۰'s and ۶۰'s, especially in the Arab World and Egypt, see Al-Fikr al-Islami al-Hadith wa Silatih bi'l-Afkar al-Gharbi.

most committing type possible, was different from the religious understanding of his ancestors. He was the child of another era, another experience, another necessity and another need.(۱)

For certain historical and sociopolitical reasons, this personality, psychological and

ideal difference was manifested in socio-religious discussions. The major difference in the religious perception of the new generation and that of his previous generation is in their understanding of politico-religious discussions. Therefore, the classical Sunni thought, even in its most progressive and modernized form could not provide an appropriate response in this regard. The classical thought was appropriate for conditions that no longer existed and it was no longer effective, especially as this had its own vulnerabilities. The Sunni political thought is mainly based on consensus while this basis could not bear and survive the doubts and criticisms of the new generation, as it did not, and many of its assumed principles and theorems collapsed in practice.(۲)

Nevertheless, these factors altogether entailed new needs and obligations. The basic problem was that the needs and obligations were in conflict with the past thought and heritage. They sought to find, from an extensive jurisprudential and theological or even historical and traditional collection, which at least considered weakening the ruler as religiously unacceptable if not entirely approving the ruler and the ruling system, a response for fighting the ruler. For the first time in their history, they wanted to stand against their ruler based on religious grounds and to find examples in the past history and fatwas with

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۱- Concerning the differences of these two periods and these two experiences, for example see the story of the intellectual and doctrinal developments of one of the contemporary Muslim intellectuals, which he recounts honestly and frankly. Min al-'Aqidah ila'th-Thawrah, pp. ۴۶-۸.

۲- See the discussions and arguments of 'Abdu'r-Razzaq in Al-Islam wa Usul al-Hukm, where he seeks to remove caliphate as a religious principle or even a religious affair. He denies the consensus of scholars in this respect, and indirectly the partisans of consensus. His critics in general have relied on this and have rejected his opinions from this point of view. For example, see the seven criticisms that the al-Azhar Faculty made of him, based on them he was tried and then expellected from al-Azhar. Introduction by Muhammad 'Amarah to Al-Islam wa Usul al-Hukm, p. ۲۱. Also see the

book Sadd Bab al-Ijtihad wa ma Tarattab ‘alayh by ‘Abdu’l-Karim al-Khatib, which makes similar criticisms of ‘Abdu’r-Razzaq from a different position. His main goal is defending the opening of the way for new interpreations, thereby overcoming the religious crisis, contributing to religious awareness of Muslims and helping further .Islamicize the society. Ibid., p. ٧

.whose help to justify their actions and legalize it while this was impossible to do

This was a serious real need while their doctrinal foundations and historical experiences were in conflict therewith. Such a dead end led them towards unprecedented theories and solutions that were far from the general beliefs and consensus of Sunnis, from the theories set forth in Sayyid Qutb’s Ma‘alim fi’t-Tariq to the extremist thoughts of Mustafa Shukri’s “At-Takfir wa’l-Hijrah” group, and from ‘Abdu’s-Salam Faraj’s Al-Faridah al-Gha’ibah to ‘Utaybi’s Al-Imarah wa’t-Ta‘ah wa’l-.Biy‘ah

It is not clear yet which of these theories will prevail in the future because these theories are not based on specific principles so as to be used for predicting the future. What is critical and forms it is the present conditions and the pressure to find a challenging solution and the mentality of those who think of their own problems, one day by saying the society is a pre-Islamic Ignorant one, so as to obligate fighting it, and the other day by resorting to certain parts of the Prophet’s (S) and the early Islamic history in an attempt to choose an isolated minority who has left its society and immigrated, with the help of which they intend to Islamicize the society, which at another time they resort to a fatwa by Ibn Taymiyyah and prove the need of fighting the present society, which includes Muslims, who, although they are Muslims and cannot be deemed as infidels, yet they are ruled by non-Islamic rulers and by

non-Islamic law and order, and, sometimes, they question his religious legality and (prove the need to fight him because of violating the allegiance conditions.(١

We see that, although all seek the same goal, each have gone a different way without

the slightest agreement or similarity between their ways. This is itself the best reason for what was said. On the one hand, there is increasing pressure that cannot be moderated or deviated and requires an explicit definite response. On the other hand, there is no ground for a response and, because of this, anyone seeks a way out without seeking the problem in its entirety. If anyone can invoke one or more verses of the Qur'an, sayings or historical examples to suggest a theory, one can invoke other examples from the Qur'an, the tradition and the history to provide their opposing theories. Any study of Islam in which its principles, foundations, spirit and generality are ignored and are not in harmony with its foundations is wrong, unreliable and cannot be continued. The big problem of the theoreticians and their theories returns to the same thing.(۲) Therefore, these theories attract young people for a while and are then forgotten. To clarify the issue, it would be better to mention .the thoughts and tendencies in modern history

Thought of an Islamic Government

The history of the thought of an Islamic government and the attempts to establish it within the Sunni territory goes back to the fall of the Ottoman caliphate. From the early days of the expansion of Islam

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۱ - Concering the views of 'Utaybi, see Al-Harikah al-Islamiyyah fi'l-Jazirah al-'Arabiyyah, pp. ۱۱۹-۳۰.

۲ - For example, see the fatherly sympathetic advices of Yusuf al-Qardawi in his book As-Sahawah al-Islamiyyah bayn al-Jumud wa't-Tatarruf, in which he asks the youth to put aside extremist methods and interpretations in the religion and not to go .beyond the principles and rules of the religion

to the fall of the Ottomans, the Islamic laws ruled the Muslim territories in practice. More importantly, the existence of a caliph in the following periods of the history of Islam was a great religious and spiritual support that calmed the Muslims and reminded to them that the Islamic rules and standards flow in all the aspects of their

.lives and that they have practiced their duties

According to Suyuti, throughout the history of Islam before the fall of the Ottomans, Muslims lacked a caliph only for a period of three years.(۱) Other than this brief period, there was always a caliph in some part of the Muslim World. This in itself rejected the thought of lack of an Islamic government and no one, therefore, thought of establishing one. Apart from this, the existence of the caliph responded to the religious obligation of having a caliph, following his orders and swearing allegiance to him because, according to them, any Muslim had to be under an oath of allegiance to a caliph and imam. Otherwise, they would die as if before Islam.(۲)

Here the problem was not political dependence. It was a form of religious obedience and allegiance. Otherwise, they had to live under the political control and influence of a caliph. Since the late ۱۸th century, when the Ottoman caliphate descended to a weak position, Muslims in general did not have a caliph based in Istanbul. More importantly, he was not anymore considered the most powerful Islamic power to be .proud of

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۱- Tarikh al-Khulafa', p. ۷۷.

۲- Al-Islam wa Usul al-Hukm with an introduction by Muhammad 'Amarah, p. ۹, citing Al-Minar, issue of ۲۳ April ۱۹۲۵/۲۹ Ramadan ۱۳۴۳ A.H., p. ۳۱.

However, despite lack of political hegemony, his religious position was recognized and the people had performed a great duty by paying or swearing allegiance to him.(۱)

Fall of the Caliphate

The Ottoman caliphate was overthrown in ۱۹۲۴ by the Young Turks. This was an unexpected dizzy blow. The Muslims everywhere felt that they lost their support and one of the most important divine duties had no longer been done. They could not imagine living without a caliph and at the same time being a true Muslim. To evaluate the excitement and emotion that the fall of the Ottomans entails, for example, see the

(poems of Shawqi, the prominent Egyptian poet of that time.(۲

It would be appropriate here to mention some of the developments following the .termination of the caliphate in the Muslim World and especially in Egypt

One of the well-known events of Egypt at that time was the formation of a" permanent assembly as 'the General Islamic Assembly for Formation of Caliphate', which published a magazine known as As-Khilafat al-Islamiyyah. The goal of the (conference was to appoint one of the kings in the Islamic countries as the caliph."(۳

Other than the activities of this assembly and its magazine, many scientific circles and newspapers contained the religious discussions relating to the imamate and the caliphate. As a result of these attempts, they mentioned or rather definitely said that, with the termination of the Ottoman caliphate by Ata Turk, Islam had been eliminated in Islamic countries and all Muslims are sinners until they pledge allegiance to

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۱ - Majalleh-ye Daneshkadeh-ye Adabiyyat wa 'Ulum-e Insani (Journal of Faculty of .Literature and Humanities), Mashhad University, serial no. ۵۷-۸, pp. ۴-۸

۲ - Ahmad Shawqi, the 'King of Egypt's Poets', was especially fond of the Ottomans and even Turks as the supporters of Islam and Islamism. In his divan, Ash-Shawqiyyat, one can find numerous poems full of epics and feelings that were said on different occasions in praise of the Ottomans and Turks. For example, somewhere he praises Turks and calls them the 'noblemen of all nations', asking them not to follow the thoughts of the Young Turks and not remain backward and tired and rather be dynamic, active and determined people (pp. ۲۰۶-۷) while some other place in his poems he rejoices at the sight of their navy with the flag of Islam waving (pp. ۲۰۸-۱۱). He greatly admires the war of Turks against the Greeks and calls their commander, Mustafa Kamal, 'the Turkish Khalid' (pp. ۴۴, ۲۵۸). Even where Sharif Husayn claims to be the caliph, he sends a long poem to Sultan 'Abdu'l-Majid (۱۱۹۴) and asks him as the main master of Mecca and Medina to eliminate Sharif (p. ۱۹۴). One of his most attractive and emotional poems was said when caliphate was terminated by Ata Turk,

which begins like this, “The wedding songs have turned into dirges and the message of death was brought in the cheers of happiness.” In this poem, he asks the Muslims to remind Ata Turk to stop what he is doing (pp. ۹۰-۹۳). Compare these poems with those in praise of Sharif Husayn, the Arab Empire, and in criticism of the Ottomans .and Turks. Thawrah al-‘Arab didd al-Atrak, p. ۳۵۴ and onwards

.Al-Islam wa Usul al-Hukm with an introduction by Muhammad ‘Amarah, p. ۸ -۳

another caliph. This sin would have worldly as well as otherworldly punishments which would soon occur… They also mentioned that, because of removal of the caliphate, they had returned to the Ignorance Period and those who die in such a state would .die as if they had died in the pre-Islamic Ignorance Period

Many magazines published numerous articles and fatwas in this respect, saying, “It is necessary for all to appoint an imam at this time as in the other times. All Muslims are sinners so long as they have not appointed an imam who can unify them and they will be punished in the world with what the people of insight know and, in the afterworld, they will be punished with what God knows… Those whom we have to follow are not Muslims, unless they have an imam whom has pledged allegiance been to voluntarily… The imam of Muslims heads their government and the Muslims have to (serve his glory, power and splendor.”(۱

After the caliphate, some Muslim thinkers and clerics considered for a while to revive it, as Rashid Rida theorized, “As much as the Islamic forces of this time can”.(۲) However, they did not manage to do this for numerous reasons. Revival of caliphate at that time, despite in other times, that if the caliphate had been removed, it would have been restarted somewhere else, was not subject only to the decision of the Muslims. At that time, the foreigners had a critical and effective influence and would not

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Al-Islam wa Usul al-Hukm, p. ۹, citing the newspaper Al-Ahram of ۱۲ May ۱۹۲۵, the -۱ magazine Al-Minar of ۲۳ April ۱۹۲۵, p. ۳۱. Concerning the excitement following the fall

.of caliphate, and the supports that were given to the Assembly, see ibid., pp. ٧-١۴
.Ibid., p. ١٧, citing Al-Minar, vol. ٢, issue of ٢١ July ١٩٢۵, p. ١٠٠ -٢

.remain indifferent to such a current

Apart from this, a generation of new educated people had risen who were in sensitive sociopolitical positions. They thought similarly to the Young Turks in this regard and, not only did they not intend to return to the caliphate, but they would also oppose it as much as possible. For example, Muhammad Hasanayn Hiykal, the well-known Egyptian politician writer was among them. At that time, he defended the thoughts of 'Abdu'r-Razzaq, whose book was published immediately after fall of the caliphate, and attacked his critics and harshly criticized those who worked to revive the caliphate. He wrote in this regard, "What could one say about an Islamic cleric who seeks a caliphate for the Muslims at a time when any Muslim king wishes to be the (caliph."(١

Smith, who studies the mutual relations of Islam and the contemporary developments in Egypt in the light of Muhammad Hasanayn Hiykal's biography, says, "Everybody was under the influence of the political events and socioeconomic developments of Egypt of that time. Everybody was to a certain degree under the influence of the modernists of the ١٩٢٠'s and wanted to limit Islam and the power of Muslim authorities. Such actions were reflected in 'Abdu'r-Razzaq's book, Al-Islam wa Usul (al-Hukm, and in Taha Husayn's Ash-Shu'ara' li-Jahili."(٢

Nevertheless, many, occasionally honest, attempts of many of the believers in the religious necessary of the caliphate failed. The caliphate was terminated and attempts to revive it were futile. The Muslims, despite their tendencies and beliefs, accepted

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.Ibid., p. ١٣, citing the newspaper As-Siyasah, issue of ٢٢ July ١٩٢۵ -١
.See Charles D. Smiths, Islam and the Search of Social Order in Modern Egypt, p. ١ -٢

that it was not possible to revive it although some of those in power at that time in

Islamic countries were tempted to nominate themselves for the position, yet such temptations did not last long and were replaced by realism, and the thought was (entirely forgotten.(١)

With the weakening of this trend, another trend appeared and grew, which was the thought of an Islamic government, which, to many clerics and religious intellectuals, meant nothing but the same Islamic caliphate and its continuation.(٢) Before the fall of the caliphate, this thought was not that comprehensible. The previous caliphs and sultans, although corrupt, were not against the religion as it existed among the people. Their interests on many occasions even required them to promote the religion. So long as there was no significant foreign or domestic factor against the religious reality of the society, everything was in a form of harmony with and in .compatibility to the religion and the religious heritage

However, in the modern history, everything had evolved. The scientific, intellectual and industrial developments, the opening of the closed religious society, the backward society, foreign hegemony, direct or indirect dependence of those in power and influential people on the colonialists created new conditions, as if the religion was under pressure and attack from all directions. The problem was not just that the Ottoman caliphate, as the last sociopolitical and military symbol of the Islamic society had collapsed. More importantly, the situation had entirely changed and the Muslims truly believed that all that

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In those days, some were tempted to take the position of the caliph, including the -١ king of Egypt, Malik Fu'ad. Introduction to Al-Islam wa Usul al-Hukm, pp. ٣۵-١۴۵. Another of them was Sharif Husayn in Mecca. Thawrah al-'Arab didd al-Atrak, pp. ٣١٢-۵٣. The interesting thing is that Rashid Rida and his fellow thinkers nominated the Imam of Yemen for caliph as they saw that he had the entire politico-religious conditions necessary. Andisheh-ha-ye Siyasi dar Islam-e Mu'asir (Political Thoughts in .Contemporary Islam), p. ١٣٧

Caliphate is usually understood as meaning ruling over an Islamic government. It" -٢ must even be said that 'caliphate' means an Islamic government. The consensus is that the head of the government can be called a caliph". Ma'alim al-Khilafah fi'l-Fikr .as-Siyasi al-Islami, p. ٣٠

(they had was threatened by these events.(١

In such conditions, eyes were directed towards a new concept, which was the Islamic government. Indeed, it was not a new concept but its realization, as it occurred in middle of the present century and its manifestation as a politico-religious ideal was a new issue. It soon had numerous supporters in different classes and, in the absence of an acceptable, deeply rooted and unanimously agreed on political ideal, it became the most important ideal of the Islamic societies. In the meanwhile, numerous other developments and events occurred, all of which contributed to the acceptability and (expansion of this trend.(٢

Influence of Western Laws

Along with this trend, the western laws rapidly extended in Islamic countries. This had indeed nothing to do with the termination of the caliphate. Even if the Ottoman caliphate continued, the western laws would have entered Islamic countries and even to Turkey itself, as it had already done. This resulted from the entire conditions of those days not from the fall of the Ottoman caliphate, although some thought of (these two as relevant.(٣

At this time, Muslims in all Islamic societies had crept into their closed society. The rapid pace of the developments and pressure of the time along with backwardness and desperation had put them in a passive position and pushed them towards passive resistance. Those who denied or opposed the religion or had claims for the western culture, laws and value system were, in practice, the only ones who ran the society without facing any

For example, see Al-Fikr al-Islami al-Hadith fi Muwajihah al-Afkar al-Gharbiyyah, -١ .pp. ٧-۴٢

See the response of Hasan al-Banna when he was asked what he wanted. Min Usul -٢ al-Fikr as-Siyasi al-Islami, p.١١. His response provides the primary signs of the .realization of the concept of Islamic government and its idealization

Concerning the nature and history of western influence and laws in Islamic - ٣ countries, especially within the Ottoman and Indian territories, see Islamic Surveys, A .History of Islamic Law, pp. ١۴٩-۶٢

(opponent or opposition. No one could help resist the new trend and its advocates.(١

In such conditions, it was natural that the legal system and even the constitution in Islamic countries would be formed and reconstructed in the light of western laws. As the entry of Islamic countries in general into modern history coincided with the expansion of liberal thoughts and tendencies, the first thing that attracted attention was to develop laws and a constitution. Where could the laws be adopted from other (than western sources?(٢

This requires further explanation. Throughout their history, Muslims, like many other Third-Worlders, constantly suffered from the tyranny of their rulers. The most important aspect of tyrants is breaking laws and not bowing to or recognizing any rule or law. In such conditions, the new developments began and eyes and ears were opened. All of a sudden, they found out that they lived in the worst sociopolitical .conditions and in the utmost decadent backward conditions

Indeed the top intellectuals had an undeniable role in arousing this feeling and .reinforcing it

By formally comparing their society to the developed societies of that time, they had reached the conclusion that their backwardness was rooted in political tyranny and that it occured in the lack of a legal system. Therefore, they promoted liberalism as much as they could and they considered the developing of a constitution and the other laws as the only way to achieve it. The problem, in their opinion, was entirely due to the rule of tyranny

.Al-Islam bayn al-‘Ulama’ wa’l-Hakimun, pp. ۱۵-۲۵ -۱
.H. A. Gibband Harebd Brown, Islamic Society and the West, vol. ۱ -۲

(and lack of freedom, and the cure was naturally the western laws.(۱

This was perhaps one of the most inappropriate choices that the Islamic societies could make, which would entail various complications. Right now, we do not intend to say why it was inappropriate. What matters is that a flood of new laws began to flow without there being proper grounds for them, while the Muslims, at least in this respect did not face any shortage. Although there were no well-compiled laws at that time, at least the sources were there, which are the same Islamic jurisprudence and laws, and they could easily get help from and be inspired by them for their various (needs, as this happed in some Islamic countries.(۲

The first serious experience in modern history in Islamic countries, however, began through the modernization of the legal and legislative system. As we have already pointed out, this happened in the absence of committed Muslims. In those days, they were in a state of numbness and fear, had left the scene and, when they regained balance, they found out that they had to bow to new laws that were in many cases .against their religious principles and fundamentals

It would be appropriate here to quote part of the views of William Shepherd on how the Muslims entered the contemporary history, “It was through military events that for the first time the leaders of Muslim societies faced changes, such as the British conquests in the ۱۸th and early ۱۹th centuries in India

For example, see the various issues of the newspaper Qanun (Law) published by -۱ .Mirza Malkam Khan
Abdu’l-‘Aziz al-Badri thus explains the story of the influence of the new laws in the‘ -۲ Ottoman territory, “... In ۱۹۵۷, new laws including criminal and civil laws began to

influence. However, these laws were not practiced before the Shaykh al-Islam agreed to them, who issued a fatwa that they did not contradict the shari‘ah. The cleric scholars did not deem the entrance of the new civil laws into Islamic countries as religiously acceptable. Therefore, they compiled the book Al-Majallah, which was a collection of laws relating to transactions, which the authors considered to be documenting the shari‘ah. Al-Islam bayn al-‘Ulama’ wa’l-Hakimun, p. ١٧, and also .Tahrir al-Majallah, vol. ١

and the defeats of the Ottomans by the Russians in the ١٧۶٨-٧۴ wars, although the Ottomans’ awareness of the westerners’ military superiority had made them take limited actions in order to westernize their society in the early periods of the same century. In a place such as the Ottoman Empire, it was the military issues that entailed reformist attempts. However, when these reforms began, they could not be limited to what the leaders had chosen them to be.”(١)

He goes on to say, “If Christian theology sought to understand God’s nature and actions in this world, the Muslim jurisprudents sought to understand God’s will and the divine laws and shari‘ah, which would define the behavioral duties of all people. It was because of this that modernization attempts are mainly in legal fields and for sociopolitical institutions rather than on issues concerning theology. In the Muslim world, one cannot see anything similar to the great doubts that Darwinism aroused in the Western World although the picture of the creation as provided by the Qur’an is similar to that provided by the Holy Book.(٢)”

It is exactly from this point that the seed of the ideology of Islamic movements in the Sunni World was planted. As we have already said, Sunni jurisprudential and theological structure and historical experiences were not as if to allow opposing a Muslim ruler that pretended to believe in Islam. The ultimate apposition was not to bow to him in one’s heart, distance oneself from him and not

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١- William Shepard, The Faith of a Modern Intellectual.

.Ibid., p. ۴ -۲

to serve him. The most extreme form was to object in words about his vices and note .his deviations, heresy or tyranny

However, for various reasons, it was not allowed to stand up against the ruler and the ruling system and to take political or military action. From this point of view, the problem of objecting to the ruling system was not solvable. The new period, by offering laws other than those of Islam and by making them rule, opened a new door for objecting to the ruler and all the contemporary Sunni religious movements benefited from it. This was a way out and would allow them to live and go on with their (activities.(۱

Conformity to the Shari'ah

In their view, there was no place in an Islamic country for non-Islamic laws. Everyone had to accept Islamic laws and it was merely these laws that had to rule. Working for the promotion of this cause was a great undisputable and unchangeable duty. This is the concept that was later suggested as 'the conformity to the shari'ah', which attracted the thoughts and minds of committed Sunni revolutionaries and justified the (moves that had begun with this motivation.(۲

Genuine Sunni Islamic movements in the second half of the recent century in the Sunni World have all been formed with the same motive and goal. According to them, the Islamic government, i.e. a government in which Islamic laws rule, means Islamicizing, i.e. applying the Islamic laws in all aspects of individual and collective lives and making them rule

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One of the first people who began political and somehow revolutionary activities in -۱ the Sunni world was Hasan al-Banna, the founder of the Ikhwan al-Muslimin movement. He taught his followers, "If you are asked, 'What do you call the people to?', tell them, 'To the Islam that was revealed to the Prophet (S), part of which is the

government, and freedom is a duty of its duties. If they say, 'This is politics.', say, 'This is Islam and we do not make such divisions.' If they say, 'You are calling to a revolution.', say, 'We claim the truth and peace, which we believe in and are proud of. Then, if you stand against us and want to stop us from fulfil our calling our call, know that God has allowed us to defend ourselves and you will be oppressors.'" Min Usul al-Fikr as-Siyasi al-Islami, p. ١١, citing Hasan al-Banna's book, Bayn al-Ams wa'l-Yawm.

٢- Ma'alim fi't-Tariq, ٨-١١.

in the society. This is a thought that is in itself a reform but not a revolution against the ruling system. It is one against the present laws. Its goal is to change laws not the ruler, and if the ruler does not accept this, he has to be obeyed. If he stands beside these laws and wants to defend them against the people, then a fatwa may be issued for countering such a person.(١)

The principle is to Islamicize the society by Islamicizing its legal system rather than by Islamicizing it by changing its political rule. The problem is that the ruler should accept such a change and, preferably, take such an action on his own. From this point of view, regimes such as the Sau'dis or the other regimes in the ٨٠'s, when the Islamic movements were at their peaks in the contemporary era, began to conform to the shari'ah, as in Pakistan under Diya' al-Haqq, Sudan under Numayri, Egypt under Sadat, and in many sheikdoms of the Persian Gulf.(٢)

Such a way of thinking in the past four or five decades, when non-Islamic laws ruled absolutely, although a reformist thought was considered to be a revolutionary thought at that time. Now that the conditions have changed entirely and the psychology, wishes and religious ideals of the young people have changed, this thought cannot respond to their passion for change and struggle. They need something far beyond this limited and somehow conservative capacity. They require the rule of Islamic values

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١- Even a committed independent sholar like the author of the book Ma'alim al-

Khilafah al-Islamiyyah, who in his book criticizes the views of many before him concerning caliphate, its qualifications, how it can be established and the necessity or non-necessity of opposing it, is not willing to oppose the ruling system although his definition of caliphate is more logical and progressive than those of many of his predecessors and even contemporaries, "Ruling over all the Muslims in the world in order to administer the shari'ah and carry out the call of Islam to the world", ibid., p. ٣٠. He also says, "The ummah has power and, when it pledges allegiance to a caliph for the latter's ruling over the government and to match Islam to the everyday life scientifically, the caliph will represent the ummah in its power because the ummah wishes to enforce the laws of Islam and the caliph represents the ummah in doing so. Therefore, one is appointed caliph only if the ummah pledges allegiance to him willingly and voluntarily, which constitutes a reason for the caliph's representing the ummah." Ibid., p. ٣٨. Regarding rising up against the ruler, he says, "If the uprising results in bloodshed between Muslims, it is not allowed as disturbing the country is religiously forbidden and an action that results in a forbidden thing is forbidden based on the rule 'The means of the forbidden is forbidden.' Therefore, it is necessary to obey him [the ruler] and to take part in a jihad by his side in order to put down any disturbance. He will the emir but not the caliph, unless he has taken allegiance from Muslims with their satisfaction and without their reservations." Ibid., p. ١٢۶.

٢- One of the outstanding committed Sunni cleric scholars in our time, Shaykh As'ad Bayyud at-Tamimi, says, "The purpose of the Islamic government is to enforce the shari'ah." This has been often quoted from him. Also see Tahawwul wa Thubat (Development and Stability), pp. ١-١٢٠.

in all aspects not the rule of Islamic laws in the appearances of the social life, which the shari'ah deals with. The utter dead end of the present Islamic movement in the Sunni World is in this same point. The only door that was opened to them in their jurisprudential and theological thought is too limited to respond to the serious needs of the present generation.(١)

It is because of this limitation that thinkers of the new Islamic movements in general, from Sayyid Qutb to 'Utaybi and 'Abdu's-Salam Faraj, have provided interpretations

and justifications that are entirely strange to Sunni principles, beliefs and consensus. They have tried to resort to witnesses in the Qur'an, the tradition and fatwas of some clerics of the past, on the top of whom are Ibn Taymiyyah and Ibn Qayyim, to provide an ideology that can religiously legalize and even necessitate fighting the ruling system and even establishing a new system. If great Sunni scholars consider these thoughts and theories with doubt, so much so that they liken their founders, claimers and supporters to the Rebels, it is not because of conservatism or seeking a comfortable life. It is because of believing in the principles and foundations of Sunni jurisprudence and theology, unanimously agreed on.(۲)

They truly say that, by considering the Qur'an, the tradition and the practice of the Companions and the good people of the past, which the Sunnis have understood and practiced in the past, one cannot accept such theories. These theories are far

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۱- For further explanation, see Payambar wa Fir'un (The Prophet and the Pharaoh), pp. ۷۵-۱۹۲.

۲- The implicit response by many to such criticisms, which are in turn the result of new expectations brought about by the newly created socio-economic developments and politico-intellectual necessities, has been provided humbly by a virtuous Sunni cleric scholar, Muhammad Diya' ad-Din ar-Rays, many years before the criticisms were so severe. Indeed, he is addressing non-Muslim criticics or non-believer Muslims. However, it is an answer to all those who have criticized Sunni clergy for their political position throughout the history, whether they are committed Muslims or uncommitted non-Muslims. "Some writers, and especially orientalists, accuse Sunnis and provide a picture of them that neither conforms to the reality and nor favors them. They say, 'They were inclined towards the rulers and were in agreement with their practice and cooperated with them in what they did. People like Hasan Basri, Sha'bi, Sa'id ibn Jubayr and Sa'id ibn al-Musayyib during the Umayyad and Abu Hanifah, Malik and Ahmad during the 'Abbasid periods were in conflict with the policy of the rulers and emirs of their time and even refused to accept the governmental order with which

they had reached power." An-Nazariyyat as-Siyasiyyah al-Islamiyyah, p. ٧١. Somewhere else, he explains the reasons why they were indifferent to political issues, "Sunnis and the people believed that an uprising and a revolution that is not expected to succeed will create disturbance, anarchy, bloodshed, dispersion and crimes. Therefore, they preferred to stay out of politics and, instead, have scientific activities that were more useful and stable." Ibid., p. ٧١. Providing further explanation, he says, Sunnis left it to the Rebels, Shi'ites, Mu'tazilites and suspensionists to discusss and contemplate imamate and the relevant issues. They did not develop, define and limit their views in this regard until later when the former gave them up. However, this does not mean that they lacked political opinions or were content with the ruling politics, whether the Umayyad or the 'Abbasid ones." Ibid., p. ٧٠. For further .explanation, see ibid., pp. ٦٩-٧۵

beyond the most extremist true interpretations of the Qur'an, the tradition and the practice of the Companions. Although there may be others in the meanwhile that say such a thing because of bad intentions and having certain dependences and may even promote that it is practically so—in which respect the Sau'dis and the clerics supporting them are the great claimers of this thought at present—this is true without (regard to who has said it and with what intentions.(١

Apart from these issues, which are theoretical anyway, there are other issues as well. We have already said that the differences of Shi'ite and Sunni movements, especially in contemporary history, are not ideological differences. There is also a difference in their sociopsychological structure, with each of them having created theoretical specifications of their own in a different sociopsychological structure. This difference is the product of centuries of differently experiencing two different ideologies. Any great extensive movement in any of the two would naturally be strongly influenced by these different structures. Because of this, one should not expect the manifestations and emergence of the two movements to be the same merely on the grounds that they are both Islamic. It is true that both are Islamic movements and seek to establish the rule of Islam, yet the problem is that two different interpretations of Islam have (influenced their past and is still influencing them today.(٢

Sunni Islamic and revolutionary problems and dead ends are, on the one hand, rooted in the jurisprudential and theological limitations

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۱- This point and even deadlock is well explained by Gibb, "Thus, it emerges that, while one can legally depose the caliph, there is no legal means to do it. This is not only Mawardi's problem, but a problem in Sunni political thought up to his time. This confirms that the Sunni political theory is in fact the rationalization of the history of the Islamic ummah while there is no theory without it." For further explanation, see Nazariyyat al-Imamat 'inda ash-Shi'ah al-Imamiyyah, pp. ۱۴۹-۶۳.

۲- Al-Fikr as-Siyasi ash-Shi'i, pp. ۱۱۶-۲۶۶

of this religious branch for fighting the ruling power and, on the other hand, in the rapid developments that have led the new Islamist generation in some Islamic countries to embrace challenging thoughts and methods. These limitations and this rapid pace made it impossible for Sunni religious clergies and intellectuals to move side by side with them.(۱)

Indeed, a great part of this was due to the pressures of the ruling governments on scientific and religious centers, eliminating their dependence and employing them forcefully. Those in power in Sunni countries in general, especially in Arab countries which are the base for extensive self-motivated religious movements, from Tunisia and Morocco to Egypt, Syria, Arabia and Yemen, have constantly attempted in recent decades to take control of scientific and religious centers with such claims as modernizing the educational system. However, the result of these developments was not just their being put at their service. More important than that was that they gave up their scientific depth and comprehensiveness and religious authenticity while this was something contrary to the needs of the time. Responding to religious, scientific and moral needs requires living in the time and comprehending the time while also requiring depth and genuineness. Those who are strange to the great Islamic heritage in various grounds will certainly not be able to provide an appropriate response to the needs of the time.(۲)

These problems showed themselves from the mid-۶۰'s and were intensified by the proper conditions in the ۷۰'s, while culminating after the victory

p: ۳۰۵

See the book Sadd Bab al-Ijtihad wa ma Tarattab 'alayh, pp. ۵-۸. The author himself -۱ is one of the religious scholars who approaches the intellectual and religious stagnation of the religious scholars and the resulting problems more honestly and sympathetically. Also see the views of Amin concerning the need to open the doors to .religious interpretation in William Shepard, The Faith of a Modern Muslim Intellectual

Concerning the modernization of the religious educational system and its - ۲ consequences, see the views of 'Abduh in Al-Fikr al-Islami al-Hadith wasailathu bi'l-Isti'mar al-Gharbi, pp. ۱۷۶-۸۱, in which he provides an interesting description of the mentality of the cleric scholars in al-Azhar, "If a book reaches the hands of these scholrs in which something is written that they do not know, or if they do not find out about the intentions of the writer, or if they find little about it, they will reject it and will refuse to accept it. If they accept it, they will interpret it with their own knowledge, which is in fact distorting it." Also, see the views of Khalid Muhammad Khalid in Ash-Shi'ah fi'l-Mizan, pp. ۳۷۵-۸, and also Wu''az as-Salatin, ۲۹۱-۳۰۲ concerning its consequences, especially see Payambar wa Fir'un (The Prophet and the Pharaoh), pp. ۱۰۲-۱۵; also, Charles D. Smith, Islam and the Search of Social Order in Modern Egypt, .pp. ۱۰۹-۱۳; and also Fazlur Rahman, Islam and Modernity, pp. ۶۳-۷۰

of the Islamic Revolution in Iran. The main problem was arriving in a new interpretation of Islam that would guide them in their struggle and tell them what to do in order to make an Islamic society and how to fight. They rose to action in the absence of a well-informed scientific and religious authority that they could trust. However, the problem was that, firstly, they knew little, and, secondly, they had already made their decision as to what they wanted and what they had to do. Their little knowledge served to respond to a question that had already been answered. (The purpose was to get confirmation for the response.(۱

In such conditions, naturally the answer could not be completely Islamic. It was more

Islamic-based than of an Islamic nature. However, as the responses were in general harmony to the psychological, intellectual and doctrinal needs of the young people and the students, they were rapidly and intensively absorbed and deemed as strictly Islamic solutions. This, however, had two basic problems and could not resist the ups and downs to survive. The resistance of an ideology, especially revolutionary and military ideologies, against the current of events depends on their commitment to the adopted principles, on their internal coherence and harmony and their ability in solving the new problems and dead ends, while the latter is indebted to the first two .former characteristics. These newly-founded ideologies lacked such characteristics

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Payambar wa Fir'un (The Prophet and the Pharaoh), pp. ۲۷۳-۹۵. Better examples - ۱ can be found in the various issues of the magazine An-Nadhir, especially in years ۱۹۸۱-.۱۹۸۵

About center

In the name of Allah

هَلْيَسْتَوِيالَّذِينَيَعْلَمُونَوَالَّذِينَلَايَعْلَمُونَ

?Are those who know equal to those who do not know

al-Zumar: ۹

:Introduction

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan, from ۲۰۰۷, under the authority of Ayatollah Haj SayyedHasanFaqihImami (God blesses his soul), by sincere and daily efforts of university and seminary elites and sophisticated groups began its activities .in religious, cultural and scientific fields

:Manifesto

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan in order to facilitate and accelerate the accessibility of researchers to the books and tools of research, in the

field of Islamic science, and regarding the multiplicity and dispersion of active centers in this field

and numerous and inaccessible sources by a mere scientific intention and far from any kind of social, political, tribal and personal prejudices and currents, based on performing a project in the shape of (management of produced and published works from all Shia centers) tries to provide a rich and free collection of books and research papers for the experts, and helpful contents and discussions for the educated generation and all classes of people interested in reading, with various formats in the cyberspace.

Our Goals are:

-propagating the culture and teachings of Thaqalayn (Quran and Ahlulbayt p.b.u.t)

-encouraging the populace particularly the youth in investigating the religious issues

-replacing useful contents with useless ones in the cellphones, tablets and computers

-providing services for seminary and university researchers

-spreading culture study in the publich

-paving the way for the publications and authors to digitize their works

Policies:

-acting according to the legal licenses

-relationship with similar centers

-avoiding parallel working

-merely presenting scientific contents

-mentioning the sources

It's obvious that all the responsibilities are due to the author.

Other activities of the institute:

-Publication of books, booklets and other editions

-Holding book reading competitions

-Producing virtual, three dimensional exhibitions, panoramas of religious and tourism places

-Producing animations, computer games and etc.

-Launching the website with this address: www.ghaemiyeh.com

Fabricatingdramatic and speech works-

Launching the system of answering religious, ethical and doctrinal questions-

Designing systems of accounting, media and mobile, automatic and handy systems,- web kiosks

Holding virtual educational courses for the public-

Holding virtual teacher-training courses-

Producing thousands of research software in three languages (Persian, Arabic and- English) which can be performed in computers, tablets and cellphones and available and downloadable with eight international formats: JAVA, ANDROID, EPUB, CHM, PDF, HTML, CHM, GHB on the website

Also producing four markets named "Ghaemiyeh Book Market" with Android, IOS,- WINDOWS PHONE and WINDOWS editions

:Appreciation

We would appreciate the centers, institutes, publications, authors and all honorable .friends who contributed their help and data to us to reach the holy goal we follow

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Users' affairs: ۰۹۱۳۲۰۰۰۱۰۹

Introduction of the Center – Ghaemiyeh Digital Library

